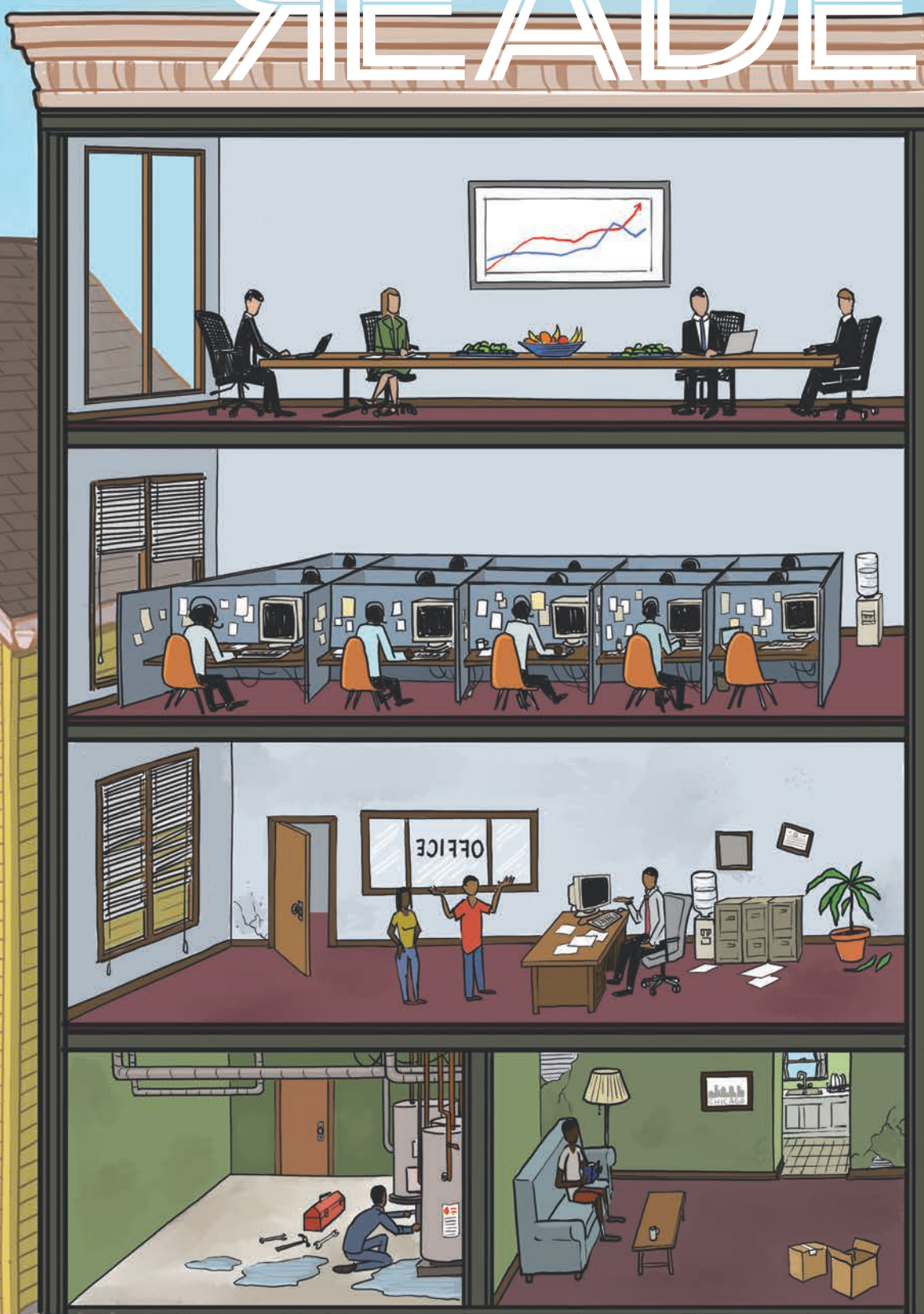


READER



‘An absolute caste system’

Current and former employees of Pangea, the city’s top evictor, describe racism, segregation, and a “toxic” workplace.

MAYA DUKMASOVA | 16



IN THIS ISSUE



CITY LIFE

05 Street View Artist Jenny Kendler keeps both style and the environment in sight.

FOOD & DRINK

06 Drinks at Home Build your own Chicago bar cart.



08 Feature Full Circle Fungi makes like a mushroom and cooperates

NEWS & POLITICS

10 Joravsky | Politics Teachers, parents, and students have to decide if CPS can keep COVID-19 out of the classroom.

12 Transportation How ancient Jewish religious law influenced the design of a bike bridge in West Rogers Park

14 Isaacs | Culture Isn't it time we provided a stipend for the state's poet laureate?



16 Dukmasova | Feature Current and former employees of Pangea, the city's top evictor, describe racism, segregation, and a "toxic" workplace.

ARTS & CULTURE

22 Dive Bar History The remarkable life of Art Castillo and Moulin Jimmy's

24 Public Art A photo project highlights the beauty of Logan Square as seen through the eyes of new and old locals.

THEATER

26 Dance Ruth Page's Nutcracker, reimagined for a shutdown

27 Neighborhood Tours Chicago

Children's Theatre's Walkie Talkies brings community lore to life.

FILM

41 Review Finding Yingying looks at the human impact of a tragic crime.

42 Essay How Chicago-based love stories provide comfort in the middle of a pandemic

43 Movies of note Black Bear is smart and ambitious cultural commentary, Queer Japan paints an electric portrait of the country's LGBTQ+ community, and Sound of Metal peels back the internalized ableism surrounding deafness.



MUSIC & NIGHTLIFE

44 Feature Internal strife, unpaid royalties, and the looming possibility of a sale have forced venerable Chicago indie Bloodshot Records to a crossroads.

50 Chicagoans of Note Adam Gogola, front man of Blind Adam & the Federal League



52 Records of Note A pandemic can't stop the music, and this week the Reader reviews current releases by New Goo, Aluna, Moğollar, Guido Gamboa, Mars Williams's Ayler Xmas project, and more.

56 Early Warnings Rescheduled concerts and other updated listings

56 Gossip Wolf Rapper Matt Muse runs a second Love & Nappyness Hair Care Drive, a new local compilation benefits Chicago Community Jail Support, and former youth poet laureate Kara Jackson releases a Christmas EP.

OPINION

60 Savage Love Dan Savage fact-checks a letter about a casserole's "secret ingredient."

CLASSIFIEDS

65 Jobs
65 Apartments & Spaces
65 Marketplace

ON THE COVER: ILLUSTRATION BY JUSTIN SANTORA. FOR MORE OF SANTORA'S WORK, GO TO JUSTINSANTORA.COM.



TO CONTACT ANY READER EMPLOYEE, E-MAIL: (FIRST INITIAL)(LAST NAME) @CHICAGOREADER.COM

PUBLISHER AND PRESIDENT TRACY BAIM
PUBLISHER AND EDITOR IN CHIEF KAREN HAWKINS
EDITOR IN CHIEF SUJAY KUMAR
CREATIVE LEAD RACHEL HAWLEY
GRAPHIC DESIGNER AMBER HUFF
MUSIC EDITOR PHILIP MONTORO
THEATER AND DANCE EDITOR KERRY REID
CULTURE EDITOR BRIANNA WELLEN
ASSOCIATE EDITOR JAMIE LUDWIG
SENIOR WRITERS MAYA DUKMASOVA, LEOR GALIL, DEANNA ISAACS, BEN JORAVSKY, MIKE SULA
EDITORIAL ASSOCIATE S. NICOLE LANE
PRODUCTION MANAGER KIRK WILLIAMSON
LISTINGS COORDINATOR SALEM COLLO-JULIN
SOCIAL JUSTICE REPORTING FELLOW ADAM M. RHODES
CONTRIBUTORS ED BLAIR, NOAH BERLATSKY, LUCA CIMARUSTI, MARISSA DE LA CERDA, MARI COHEN, NINA LI COOMES, JOSH FLANDERS, SHERI FLANDERS, JACK HELBIG, IRENE HSAIO, BECCA JAMES, CATALINA MARIA JOHNSON, MONICA KENDRICK, STEVE KRAKOW, NOËLLE D. LILLEY, MAX MALLER, ADAM MULLINS-KHATIB, J.R. NELSON, JEFF NICHOLS, MARISSA OBERLANDER, ARIEL PARRELLA-AURELI, KATHLEEN SACHS, CATEY SULLIVAN

DIRECTOR OF DIGITAL JOHN DUNLEVY
SOCIAL MEDIA COORDINATOR JANAYA GREENE
STAFF AND SPECIAL PROJECTS ASSISTANT TARYN ALLEN

STRATEGIC INNOVATION DIRECTOR MARIAH NEUROTH
DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR COLETTE WILLARD
MEDIA PARTNERSHIPS COORDINATOR YAZMIN DOMINGUEZ
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT SANDRA L. KLEIN
MEDIA PARTNERSHIPS AND DEVELOPMENT ADVISOR ABHIMANYU CHANDRA
SPECIAL EVENTS CONSULTANT KRISTEN KAZA

ADVERTISING
312-392-2970, ADS@CHICAGOREADER.COM
CLASSIFIEDS:
CLASSIFIED-ADS@CHICAGOREADER.COM

VICE PRESIDENT OF SALES AMY MATHENY
SALES DIRECTOR AMBER NETTLES
CLIENT RELATIONSHIP MANAGER TED PIEKARZ
SENIOR ACCOUNT REPRESENTATIVES
LENI MANAA-HOPPENWORTH, LISA SOLOMON
CLASSIFIED SALES MANAGER WILL ROGERS

NATIONAL ADVERTISING
VOICE MEDIA GROUP 1-888-278-9866
VMGADVERTISING.COM
JOE LARKIN AND SUE BELAIR

DISTRIBUTION CONCERNS
distributionissues@chicagoreader.com
312-392-2970

CHICAGO READER L3C
BOARD PRESIDENT DOROTHY R. LEAVELL
TREASURER EILEEN RHODES
AT-LARGE SLADJANA VUCKOVIC

CONSULTANT CAROL E. BELL

THE 501C3 FISCAL SPONSOR FOR THE CHICAGO READER IS THE OAK PARK-RIVER FOREST COMMUNITY FOUNDATION.

READER (ISSN 1096-6919) IS PUBLISHED WEEKLY BY CHICAGO READER L3C
2930 S. MICHIGAN, SUITE 102 CHICAGO, IL 60616
312-392-2934, CHICAGOREADER.COM

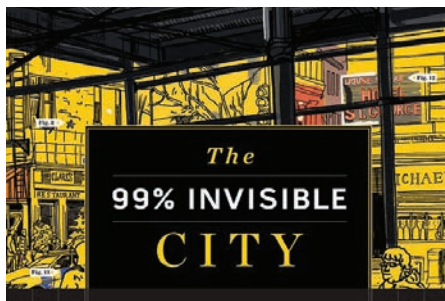
COPYRIGHT © 2020 CHICAGO READER

THIS WEEK ON CHICAGOREADER.COM



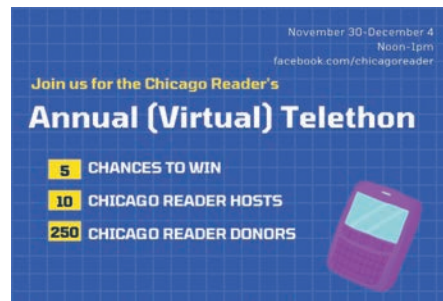
Disappearing hoops

In the last decade the park district has removed 12 of 16 basketball courts from gentrifying neighborhoods.



Travel guide to your block

The 99% Invisible City takes a second look at familiar cities.

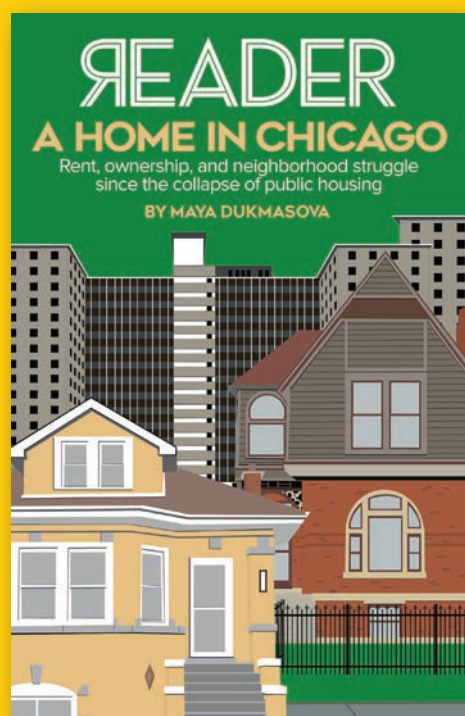


Thank you!

The Reader held a telethon live on our Facebook page, where you can still watch the videos.

A HOME IN CHICAGO:

Rent, ownership, and neighborhood struggle since the collapse of public housing



The new book from Chicago Reader's own Maya Dukmasova

Available in paperback and PDF download

chicagoreader.com/mayabook



When A Great Deal Matters, Shop Rob Paddor's...

EVANSTON SUBARU IN SKOKIE

PLEASE SUPPORT OUR CHARITIES



SUBARU OF AMERICA WILL DONATE \$250 TO ONE OF SIX CHARITIES, WITH ANY NEW SUBARU PURCHASE.

ALL WHEEL DRIVE

0%

7 OR 8 PASSENGERS
Ascent



Outback



63 MONTHS

ON EVERY NEW 2021 SUBARU OUTBACK AND 2021 SUBARU ASCENT

NEW 2021 SUBARU CROSSTREK

NEW 2021 SUBARU FORESTER

ALL WHEEL DRIVE



\$169 PER MONTH

All-Wheel-Drive, , HD Radio, USB Bluetooth, Back-up Camera

NO SECURITY DEPOSIT! 36 month lease. \$2,995 due at signing. MRA-01 #76804

\$189 PER MONTH

AUTOMATIC, Roof Rails, Alloys, EyeSight, All-Wheel-Drive

NO SECURITY DEPOSIT! 36 month lease. \$2,995 due at signing. MFB-01 #76805

Voted "BEST AUTO DEALERSHIP"
By CHICAGO READER Voters' Poll 2019

TOP-QUALITY INSPECTED USED CARS & SUV's

IMPORTS & DOMESTICS

'15 Nissan Murano Plat. AWD/Nav.Leather, Blind Spot, Orange, 25148A ...\$21,995	'17 Forester TouringLeather, Sunroof, 25K, Silver, 25407A ...\$24,995
'17 Toyota Rav4 XLE AWDAutomatic, Sunroof, 15K, Red, 25165A ...\$19,995	'18 Forester Prem.Automatic, Heated Seats, Silver, 25464A ...\$21,995
'17 Mazda 6 Touring/Nav.Blind Spot, Leather, 24K, Soul Red, 24857A ...\$18,995	'17 Forester 2.5iAutomatic, Full Power, Black, P6773 ...\$19,995
'14 BMW 535i/Nav.Leather, Moonroof, 66K, Black 25115A ...\$17,995	'16 Forester Prem.Automatic, Heated Seats, Red, 25478A ...\$15,995
'17 Nissan Rogue Sport S AWDAuto, 1-Owner, Black, P6736 ...\$17,995	
'13 VW Tiguan SEL 4x4/Nav.Sunroof, 58K, Black, 25426A ...\$15,995	
'14 Honda CR-V EX-L/Nav. AWDAuto., Sunroof, Leather, Coffee, 25008A ...\$15,995	
'11 Toyota Sienna XLE7 Pass., Sunroof, Leather, 65K, Grey, 25466A ...\$14,995	
'14 Honda CR-V EX AWDAutomatic, Sunroof, White, P6743A ...\$14,995	
'17 Nissan Murano SV AWDAuto., Full Power, Gun Metal, 25057A ...\$14,995	
'12 Honda Civic HybridAuto., Leather, 39K, Polished Metal, P6768AA ...\$10,995	
'13 Toyota Prius C TwoAutomatic, Bluetooth, Silver, 25247A ...\$10,995	
'12 Hyundai Sonata GLSAutomatic, Keyless Entry, 46K, Blue, 24858A ...\$8,995	
'08 Toyota Matrix XRAuto., Full Power, Red, 25278A ...\$7,995	
'09 Toyota Camry HybridAutomatic, Full Power, Grey, P6732 ...\$7,995	

SUBARU FORESTERS

SUBARU OUTBACKS

SUBARU ASCENT/ CROSSTREK

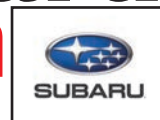
'19 Ascent Prem.7 Passenger, Blind Spot, Tungsten, P6748A ...\$27,995
'18 Crosstrek PremAutomatic, Heated Seats, Black, P6776 ...\$20,995
'17 Crosstrek PremAutomatic, Heated Seats, Grey, 25324A ...\$17,995

Evanston Subaru



EvanstonSubaru.com

3340 OAKTON - SKOKIE • 847-869-5700



*Add tax, title license and \$300 doc fee. **Finance on approved credit score Subject to vehicle insurance and availability. Monthly payment of \$15.87 per \$1,000 borrowed. *Lease on approved credit score. Lease, 10k miles per year, 15 cents after. Lessee responsible for excess wear and early termination of lease. Lease end option to purchase; Forester \$16,702. Crosstrek \$13,977. Ends 1/4/21

GIVE THE GIFT OF JOY



BUY IN-STORE TODAY

Learn more at IllinoisLottery.com



ILLINOIS IS FULL OF WINNERS®

18+ Be Smart, Play Smart® Must be 18 or older to play.

Game odds available at IllinoisLottery.com



STREET VIEW

Bird's eye view

Artist Jenny Kendler keeps both style and the environment in sight.

By ISA GIALLORENZO

Much like *Birds Watching*, Jenny Kendler's permanent sculpture on the 606 depicting 100 eyes of birds threatened by extinction, the interdisciplinary artist keeps her eyes wide open to the impact people have on the environment. Her work focuses on the relationship between human beings and the natural world—especially concerning biodiversity loss and climate change. When it comes to the fashion industry, she doesn't turn a blind eye either.

"The garment industry is responsible for 8 percent of warming emissions, making it a bigger contributor to the climate crisis than the aviation industry," she says. "In addition to significant pollution from farming nonorganic cotton, heavy-metal containing dyes, and synthetics made from fossil fuels, the garment industry is also responsible for massive worker abuses and exploitation across the globe. When you don't think about where you shop, your clothing can accidentally become a statement about your inattention to justice in the world."

Even though Kendler, 40, stopped shopping at traditional clothing retailers 15 years ago and now wears exclusively secondhand or artisanal garments, she still gives her personal style plenty of consideration. "It is a nonverbal way to tell the world something about yourself, express your culture, or even to send a political message. In that sense, style is a part of everything that I am interested in! Why not broadcast on all channels? Both my artwork and my closet work to express my values, bring a spirit of joy and play to the mundane or overlooked, and work to reenchant

and shift spaces that otherwise have been overtaken by consumer capitalism." Kendler suggests people should reconsider their idea of "value."

"Americans love a deal, but something that is trendy which you won't like in six months, or a garment which quickly falls apart, isn't really worth any money," she says. "Instead, invest in well-made, beautiful clothes that support artisans or fair-trade and B-corporations. Think about how what you wear can more fully express your personality and help bring into being the kind of clean, green and just world you'd like to live in. Style is an easy (and important) place to practice our bravery and desire for social change!"

The day Kendler was photographed, she was covered in earthy tones and multiple textures, while sporting a brocade face mask made by artist Michelle Hartney. "Right now, I am feeling oversized, gender-neutral shapes and lots of nature-inspired patterns, like the 'granite' on this overcoat. I'm also thinking a lot about the artsy, liberal ladies at my synagogue in the 90s who sported chunky jewelry and handwoven boxy tops and jackets. Especially during the pandemic, I have been enjoying interjecting an element that's playful or even a little tacky, like this giant faux fur scarf from Buffalo Exchange. I got the bag on Etsy years ago. The bottom is made from up-cycled leather jackets. I don't like to compromise function—this outfit and my boots are warm and practical—but there's no reason I can't amuse myself, and maybe others, at the same time." ■

Jenny Kendler's work can be seen at jennykendler.com and on Instagram at [@jennykendler](https://www.instagram.com/jennykendler). Her first museum solo exhibition will be on display at the MSU Broad in Michigan from January 9 through late spring next year. She wants to bring attention to a petition concerning the fashion industry at [Stand.earth](https://stand.earth). To find it type "fashion green recovery" in their search box.

© ISA GIALLORENZO



**CHICAGO
PUBLIC
LIBRARY**
ONE BOOK
ONE CHICAGO



This season will explore themes of immigration, migration, refuge, identity, home and family.

HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

- **KEYNOTE PROGRAM:**
Author Mohsin Hamid
- Book Discussions
- Performances
- Poetry
- Workshops
- Web TV Series
- So much more!

BEYOND
BORDERS

ONEBOOKONECHICAGO.ORG

FOOD & DRINK



ASHLEY BEDORE

The book also lays out tips and tricks from celebrated bartenders across the country for all levels, even, yes, ding dongs. To grab your copy, visit cocktailsfordingdongs.com; it'll run you just over \$15 and you'll be prompted to order through PayPal. Bartenders from the Smith in River North have also generously given the recipe for a seasonal hot toddy (online at chicagoreader.com) in the meantime.

Now that you've got your booze, let's talk accessories. Your cart should include a shaker, jigger, julep strainer, and muddler, as well as a citrus press and zester. You can usually find these as a set, which makes them easier to hunt down. Other must-haves include a bar spoon and an ice bucket with tongs. When it comes to glassware, to start, you can get by with a set of highball (prime for a Collins or gin fizz) and lowball glasses (best used for drinks like an old fashioned or Manhattan). Once you've decided you're ready to take the next step in your glassware game, you can begin collecting martini glasses, coupes, and champagne flutes. Barshop Chicago sells these items, alongside a lineup of decanters, at moderate prices that can be shipped to your door. For an in-person shopping experience, you can stock up at the newly opened Kit: A Bar Supply Store in Portage Park.

If you want bar cart gear with a little more personality, slide by vintage shops like Broadway Antique Market, Brown Elephant, P.O.S.H., and Good Old Days. There you can snag one-of-a-kind glassware, signs, coasters, and cards that can provide some flair when hosting.

Speaking of hosting, there are some extras that might come in handy when it comes time for an intimate gathering. For instance, silicone ice cube trays, which come in all shapes and sizes—from classic block cubes and perfect round spheres to trays that can sculpt “The Child” from *The Mandalorian* series. Nothing like a baby Yoda floating in your old fashioned. Olive spears and a jar of maraschino cherries aren't a bad idea either for garnishes.

Don't have the energy to customize and keep up with your own bar cart? You can always opt for to-go cocktails from bars and restaurants around town. Either way, you're supporting local businesses while staying safe and warm within the comfort of your own home. 

 @j_rimensnyder

DRINKS AT HOME

Build your own Chicago bar cart

The at-home bar cart starter kit that supports local businesses

By JENNA RIMENSNYDER

The COVID-19 pandemic has left indoor dining in a constant state of flux in Chicago. As bars and restaurants throughout the city are scrambling to make outdoor dining as comfortable as possible for guests, rigged tarps and igloos aren't exactly ideal conditions to sip craft cocktails as temps continue to drop. Luckily, curating a bar cart at home is a simple alternative to catch a buzz without freezing your ass off. Here's a list of at-home bar cart essentials that allow you to buy local while being your own bartender.

No need to rush out and buy a bar cart—free counter space or stylish side tables also work for your at-home bar. And while stocking up on liquor can be a bit pricey, you can start with the staples and build your bottle collection at your own pace.

The threesome of spirits that make up your bare necessity bar cart includes gin, bourbon,

and Campari. You'll also want to grab a bottle of sweet vermouth. This group is a great starter pack for your cart and will allow you to tackle your staple cocktails like an old fashioned, martini, and negroni. Just a heads-up, if you're new to negronis, practice drinking them solo before ordering or crafting one on a date. The bitter cocktail is an acquired taste.

To keep your bucks in your backyard, opt to purchase your bottles from local distilleries. North Shore and FEW Spirits both offer delivery through the distillery websites with options to order through third-party delivery apps like Instacart and Drizly. Koval Distillery and Maplewood Brewery & Distillery offer scheduled contactless pickup.

Another prime component to a bourbon old fashioned are bitters. While great for cleansing the palate and facilitating digestion, the key to bitters on your bar cart is for

balancing your drinks. Chicago's Bitter Ex is operated by exes in love/partners in business Ryan Rezvani and Stephanie Andrews. The company creates handcrafted bitters locally with bottles starting at \$15. Bitter Ex recently introduced CBD bitters in a variety of flavors that boast 300 mg in each bottle to add a different kind of buzz.

If you don't want to go through the trouble of ordering from individual distilleries, opt for snagging spirits from locally-owned liquor stores in place of a chain.

Other edible necessities include sugar cubes, soda water, tonic water, demerara sugar, and citrus, like lemons, limes, and oranges. Demerara sugar is key to making simple syrup, which consists of boiling sugar and water (1:1) until the sugar dissolves. Let it cool, and pop it in a mason jar in the fridge for safekeeping. Simple, right?

It also never hurts to have a bottle of bubbles for celebratory sips and champagne floaters. This can be tucked away in your fridge until the time comes.

Rather than Googling recipes, you can snag *Cocktails for Ding Dongs*, authored and illustrated by two Chicago-based bartenders, Dustin Drankiewicz and Alexandra Ensign.



We are excited to launch our Chicago Reader Tote Bag

Get your tote today and show your support for Chicago's free and freaky independent source for local news and culture since 1971. **\$25 (includes shipping)**

chicagoreader.com/store

POETRY CORNER

The Meal After the Harvest

By Mojdeh Stoakley

*we are each other's harvest,
we are each other's business,
we are each other's magnitude and bond
- Gwendolyn Brooks*

ain't it the joy of someth'n to break bread together from grain that was sowed on family soil to take heed in the aroma of someth'n waft'n from the neighbor's home to know that we always feed each meal with prayers and hands held before	each supper with laughter 'bout someth'n as we pass the peas and pass the greens and pass the grits the heads of each table windowsills to pass some kin'a soul someth'n between ain't it calm now here
---	--

Mojdeh Stoakley is an award-winning writer, performer, activist, and educator. Mojdeh has performed and taught all over the United States, the United Kingdom, Europe, and Turkey! Mojdeh is a genderqueer Afro-Persian, but also identifies as a Cultural Worker and Social Practice Artist using art and action as catalysts for social change. They're a proud Board Member of Surviving the Mic, Founder of Social Practice Labs, and Director of the 29th National Poetry Slam.

Poem curated by Nikki Patin: Featured in *The Guardian*, *Chicago Tribune*, HBO's *Def Poetry Jam* and on international television and radio, writer, producer, designer and survivor Nikki Patin has been advocating, performing and educating for 20 years. She has performed at the National Black Theater in Harlem, Brooklyn Museum, the Goodman Theater, EXPO Chicago and many other spaces throughout the US, New Zealand and Australia. Nikki Patin holds an MFA in Creative Non-Fiction from the University of Southern Maine. Patin is the Community Engagement Director for the Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation and the founder and Executive Producer of Surviving the Mic, a survivor-led organization that crafts brave and affirming space for survivors of sexual trauma. Her work can be found at nikkipatin.com.

Free online events with the Poetry Foundation

Event information and registration at PoetryFoundation.org/Events

Open Door Series Online: Beth McDermott & Maya Marshall

Tuesday, December 15, 8:00 PM

Highlighting Chicago's outstanding writing programs

Celebrating the Poets of Forms & Features

Thursday, December 17, 2020, 6:00 PM

Celebrate the poet participants in the long-running Forms & Features workshop series.





FOOD FEATURE

Full Circle Fungi makes like a mushroom and cooperates

An oyster farm spawns in a Logan Square basement.

By MIKE SULA

Early this fall I zeroed in on a flash of orange out of the corner of my eye, perched on the gray bark of a large oak tree just off the intersection of Hamlin and Irving Park. I couldn't believe my luck. It was a *Laetiporus sulphureus*, aka a chicken of the woods mushroom, fruiting directly across the street from Independence Park. I snapped a photo and confirmed the ID with a fungi-foraging friend, and by lunch I had it sliced up in a saute pan, sizzling in butter. A chicken of the woods really does taste like chicken, but what I couldn't detect were any heavy metals the fungus may or may not have picked up from the tree, a giant thriving in Chicago's historically toxic

urban substrate. That doesn't mean they weren't there.

Mushrooms can break down and bioremediate lots of pollutants and contaminants, but they accumulate heavy metals, which is why some foragers don't recommend overconsuming city mushrooms, as I learned later. Welp. One surely wouldn't hurt.

I've been finding mushrooms in unusual places everywhere this year. There was a surprise gift delivery of foraged morels early this spring from a generous friend. And a few weeks ago I found a large flush of oyster mushrooms stacked on an elm towering over the parkway of a quiet Albany Park street.

Oyster mushrooms from Full Circle Fungi's Logan Square grow room. COURTESY JUSTIN SMURAWA

I sent photos of these for confirmation to Justin Smurawa of Full Circle Fungi, whose mushrooms I found on Instagram not long before that. His Blue, PoHu, and Black Pearl King oysters, along with Lion's Mane, Turkey Tail, and reishi, are clean and metal-free because they fruit in the controlled environment of his 100-square-foot Logan Square basement grow room.

Maybe it's coincidence—or maybe it's an inherently fungal phenomenon—but amid the growing national movement toward decriminalization of psilocybin, it seems like fungi of all varieties are in ascendance in Western culture. In Chicago within the last two years, two large indoor mushroom farms have sprouted up. Windy City Mushroom in Humboldt Park just opened a retail storefront to sell its Pioppinos, Chestnuts, and oysters, and while Logan Square's Four Star Mushrooms sells directly to chefs, you can buy 11 of their varieties directly from Local Foods. These growers join the Wisconsin-based River Valley Farm, the longrunning farmers market stalwart with a restaurant and retail outlet in Ravenswood.

Smurawa and a few friends are planning something different with Full Circle Fungi: a worker-owned mushroom-growing co-op, whose democratized antihierarchical profit-sharing model aligns with the actual growth process of fungi itself. From his Instagram: "Nothing of this world happens in a vacuum. All things, living and dead, are connected. Fungi are a great teacher in showing us how from death, new life emerges. How like the hidden mycelial web, we can connect with one another, sharing our resources for mutual benefit of one another and the collective."

Full Circle Fungi was spawned when Smurawa and some friends were hanging out at a cabin "just doing nature stuff." After ingesting a particularly potent variety of exotic mushroom, he had a "profound experience centering on a rediscovery of connection to nature, and understanding how we're still plugged into nature, despite humanity's best efforts to separate itself. That really piqued my interest in terms of what fungi have to teach us. When you ask mushroom growers, I'd be willing to bet four out of five people have similar experiences."

Smurawa, who later learned his Polish grandfather foraged mushrooms outside of Appleton, Wisconsin, watched YouTube videos, and read books, and started growing oyster mushrooms out of a 4-by-4 closet in

his basement. "Among mushroom farmers there's a really beautiful community of knowledge-sharing and cooperation, which also really exemplifies how fungi work in nature itself."

He explains how mushrooms are merely the sexual reproductive organs of the entire fungal biomass, while mycelium, its unseen thread-like root structure (for lack of a better word) acts as kind of an earthly Internet, interweaving in and among the roots of trees and plants, sharing nutrients, breaking down pollutants, and even acting as an early warning system for oncoming diseases and pests.

Over the years his grow room expanded to its current size, and while Smurawa sold mushrooms and tinctures to friends, it wasn't until late September that he went live on Instagram @fullcirclefungi offering freshly harvested edible mushrooms by the half pound, inoculated and grown on sterilized blocks of sawdust and soybean hulls. "The ultimate goal is for people to understand the importance and benefit of incorporating mushrooms into a regular diet and making them accessible to everyone." To that end he presents pro mushroom workshops, most recently one on home cultivation to Advocates for Urban Agriculture, to whom he prepped and distributed 100 grow kits.

Meanwhile he and his fellow co-op members have been working with the food incubator the Hatchery, developing the business model and preparing to scale up to the restaurant and retail market. In a month or so they'll begin offering medicinal tinctures made from antioxidant-rich Turkey Tail and reishi mushrooms, both believed to have immune-boosting and anticancer (among other) properties. He's also working with other growers to make their spent growing medium available to community gardens as compost, where its remnant active mycelium can help remediate polluted soil.

Smurawa, who usually purchases his mushroom cultures from a Maine-based mycelium library, also cloned a few of the elm oysters I gave him a few weeks ago, and before long he expects to offer a truly local Chicago mushroom. "Once you start diving into working with cultures it provides additional intrigue and nuance when you're actually able to cultivate a variety of mushroom that came from your backyard or your neighborhood."

I ate the rest of the oysters from that tree myself, toxins be damned, but when his clones are ready, they'll be heavy metal-free. 

 @MikeSula



POLITICS

To trust or not to trust . . .

Can CPS can keep COVID-19 out of the classroom?

By **BEN JORAVSKY**

As I sit in the safety of my attic—afraid to leave for fear of catching COVID—the powers that be are ordering grammar-school teachers to return to the classroom. Or else!

Pre-K and special ed classes begin January 11. Kindergarten through eighth-grade classes start by the end of January. High schoolers, stand by—your time will come. And that’s an order.

Or as Janice Jackson—CEO of Chicago Public Schools—put it in her announcement:

“Teachers don’t have a choice of opting in or out. . . . If they don’t show up to work, it will be handled the same way it’s handled in any other situation where an employee fails to come to work.”

Meaning?

Beat it, buster! You’re fired!

’Cause, you know, there’s this long line of exceedingly qualified teachers just dying to come to Chicago and possibly catch COVID in

a CPS classroom.

Especially if it means working for such warm and fuzzy administrators who clearly care so much for the teachers they employ.

Jackson and Mayor Lightfoot said teachers, students, and parents should have no fears, as they’re making sure every safety precaution is being followed.

Like . . . smaller classrooms. Everyone in masks. Teachers outfitted with hazmat suits.

Just kidding. You know CPS can’t afford hazmat suits. Not when they have to give away billions in TIF dollars to developers looking to build upscale communities in already gentrifying neighborhoods.

Anyway, this raises the question of trust. Or, more to the point . . .

If I were a Chicago Public Schools teacher, would I trust Mayor Lightfoot and Jackson when they say it’s safe to return to the classroom?

Wow, tough question.

CPS is ready to welcome students and teachers back to classrooms. Or else. MCHE LEE VIA UNSPLASH

On the one hand, you have scientists and doctors saying schools are not super-spreader environments.

On the other hand—man, none of these scientists and doctors have ever dealt with Chicago.

In contrast, I’m an old, jaded journalist who’s been chronicling the people who run Chicago schools—and the mayors who appoint them—going back to the 80s.

And before that I heard horror stories about central office bureaucrats from my schoolteacher mom. A typical sentence starting like this—*You wouldn’t believe what those schmucks did this time!*

Plus, Mayor Lightfoot and Jackson are saying they’re opening the schools ’cause it’s in the best interests of poor children.

Ugh, oh. Now, I’m really nervous.

The powers that be are always saying they’re doing stuff in the best interests of children. And somehow the best interests of poor children are never actually met.

Why, even Mayor Rahm said he was looking out for the best interests of poor Black children in economically devastated neighborhoods when he announced he was closing those 50 schools back in 2013.

Actually, Rahm didn’t announce the closing of those schools. At that time, he was off on a skiing holiday in Utah. He left it to Barbara Byrd-Bennett—his handpicked CEO—to make the announcement.

A couple of years later, Byrd-Bennett went to prison for running a scam in which an outside consulting agency got a \$21 million principal consulting contract after promising to kick a little money back to her.

And it’s pretty obvious that Mayor Rahm and his handpicked school board looked the other way on that contract—even though it reeked of corruption—because they needed Byrd-Bennett to be the public face on the school closings.

Which was supposed to be such a wonderful deal for poor Black kids in economically devastated communities.

Now I realize it’s not fair to hold Mayor Lightfoot or Janice Jackson accountable for the sins of Rahm—of which there are many.

Still, once burned, one gets a little cautious.

Anyway, I was pondering the do-I-trust-them question when I bumped into an old family friend I’ll call Indi. I’d use her real

name, but I learned long ago not to trust CPS when it comes to teachers who tell the truth about what’s really going on.

She told me that she’s nervous about returning to the classroom because she’s pregnant.

CPS said she could be exempted from the classroom with a note from her doctor confirming she’s pregnant. As opposed to lying so she can stay at home and eat bonbons.

The central office being far more vigilant about vetting teachers than, oh, well-connected consultants who are getting \$21 million contracts.

CPS instructed Indi to get an e-mail from her doctor saying she was pregnant. Only her doctor doesn’t have an e-mail address. Apparently, many doctors no longer use e-mail.

Instead, they use a system called MyChart. Which is incompatible with the CPS e-mail system.

And you can’t just get a handwritten note from your doctor. ’Cause this is the 21st century, Boomer!

Dutifully, Indi e-mailed the correct bureaucrat at the central office asking for a medical exemption form in PDF, which she would send to her doctor.

And she waited for a response. And waited. And waited. And waited.

Sick of waiting, she sent CPS another request for the PDF.

And waited. And waited. And waited.

After waiting over a week—and facing a December 11 deadline—she called her union rep. And the union rep called her contacts at CPS and—hooray—Indi got her forms. (And Mayor Lightfoot wonders why teachers need a union.)

Indi sent the PDF to her doctor. Alas, her doc’s on vacation.

Indi doesn’t know if her doctor will respond in time for the December 11 deadline. Much less if CPS will grant her an exemption.

For all we know, CPS is relying on graduates of the Rudy W. Giuliani School of Epidemiology who say *pregnancy shmregnancy. Get back in the classroom!*

So, do I trust the powers that be to do the right thing for teachers, students, and parents?

Based on Indi’s experience the answer is . . . hell no!

But, then, I’m just an old, jaded journalist who’s been chronicling the powers that be in this city for a long, long time.

@bennyjshow

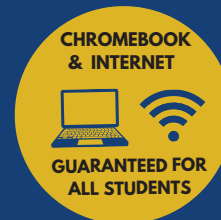


NOBLE

APPLY NOW

FALL 2021 9TH GRADE

**BEST
HIGH SCHOOLS
USNews
RANKINGS**



APPLICATIONS DUE DECEMBER 11!

FIND US AS NOBLE ON CPS

833-BE-NOBLE

GO.CPS.EDU

NOBLESCHOOLS.ORG/SIGNUP

PARA ESPAÑOL

PAID FOR WITH PUBLIC FUNDS.



It's not too
late to give
cats in need
happy
holidays.

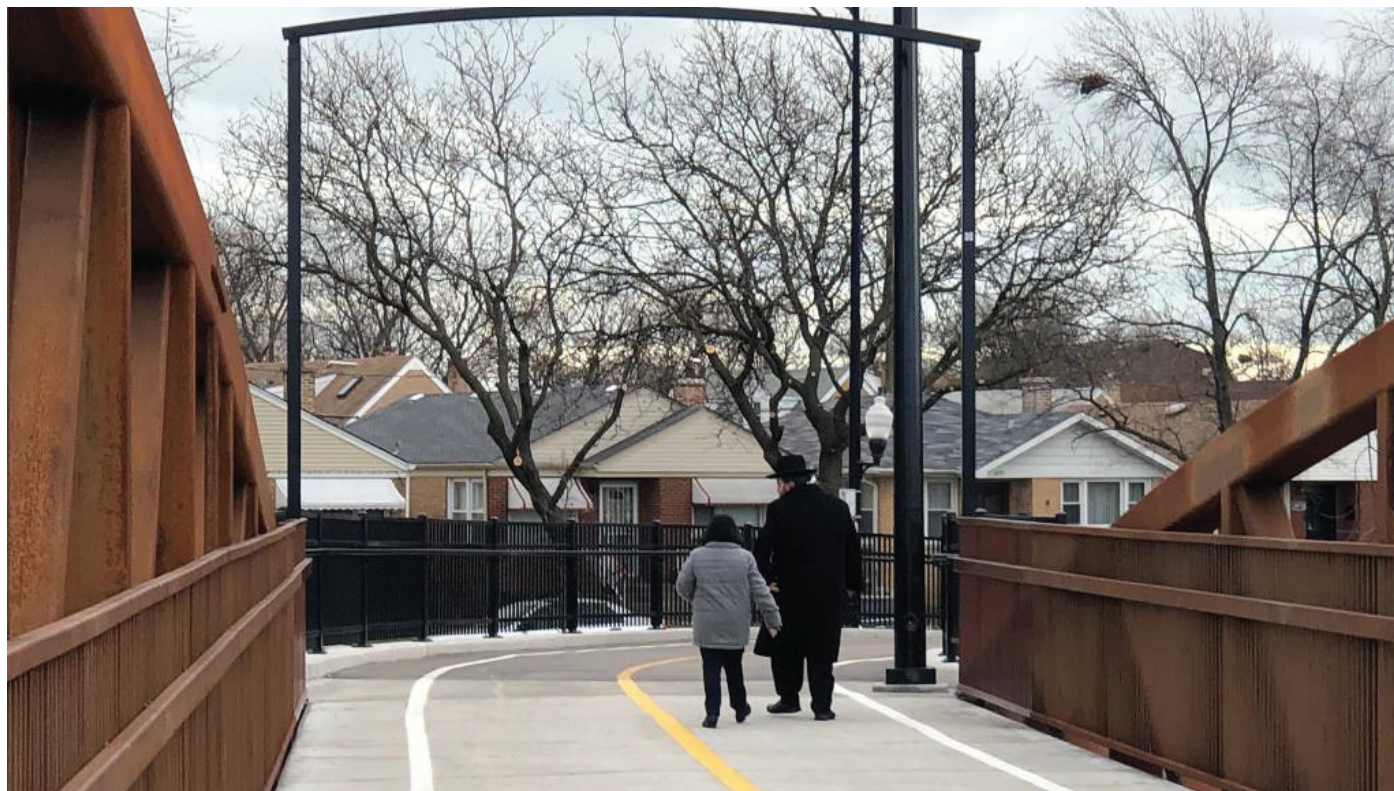


TREE HOUSE
HUMANE SOCIETY

We're matching all
gifts through the end
of the year.

That means every
donation provides
lifesaving services for
twice as many cats.

Double Your Impact | TreeHouseAnimals.Org/Give



Orthodox Jewish people cross the Stone Free Bridge.  ANDREW BEDNO FOR CHICAGO READER

TRANSPORTATION

Crossing the North Shore Channel

How ancient Jewish religious law influenced the design of a bike bridge in West Rogers Park

By JOHN GREENFIELD

This Thursday after sundown, the streets of West Rogers Park will be perfumed with the aroma of hot oil.

The neighborhood, officially designated by the city of Chicago as the West Ridge community area, is home to the midwest's largest Haredi, or strict Orthodox Jewish community (some members view the term "ultra-Orthodox" as disparaging.) It's known for the dark suits, fedoras, and beards, or headscarves and long dresses, worn by many adherents. By some estimates, Jews of various stripes make up about one in three of the 77,000-plus residents of West Ridge. The area also includes vibrant Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, and

Assyrian communities.

Thursday marks the first night of Hanukkah, the minor, but joyous, festival commemorating the liberation and rededication of the Second Temple of Jerusalem in 165 BCE by the Jewish Maccabee rebels after it had been defiled by their Syrian-Greek oppressors. According to tradition, while there was only enough olive oil to light the temple's menorah lamp for one day, miraculously it lasted a full eight, until more could be fetched.

So in addition to kindling menorahs and spinning dreidels in their homes, the Jews of West Rogers Park will indulge in oil-fried treats, including latkes and *sufganiyot* jelly

doughnuts, to remember the Maccabean miracle. Normally Haredim would gather for parties and communal menorah-lighting ceremonies, such as for the giant candelabra at Daley Plaza, but the COVID-19 pandemic poured water on those traditions this year.

Nowadays West Rogers Park's strict Orthodox community is primarily located between Peterson Avenue and Howard Street, and concentrated west of California Avenue. That boundary gave its name to native son Adam Langer's 2004 memoir *Crossing California*.

The local Haredi community is sometimes viewed as being closed off to outsiders, but it recently got a new entryway. On November 10, city officials finally cut the ribbon on the \$3.4 million Lincoln Village Pedestrian Bridge, which links two segments of the bike trail that parallels the North Shore Channel, the western boundary of West Ridge, just north of Lincoln Avenue.

Fifteen years earlier, feisty 50th Ward alderman Berny Stone blocked the construction of the already-designed and funded span under mysterious circumstances, much to the chagrin of local bicyclists. The longtime Council member was defeated by Debra Silverstein in 2011 and passed away in 2014, and Silverstein relaunched the project. In light of the span's

checkered history, I've dubbed it the Stone Free Bridge, after the eponymous Jimi Hendrix song.

After the ceremony, Chicago Department of Transportation staff members pointed out a squarish steel archway on the east side of the bow truss bridge that I hadn't noticed before. They said the structure was added to the span at the behest of Orthodox Jews as a portal to the West Rogers Park Eruv.

An eruv (pronounced "AY-roove") is a symbolic enclosure around a Jewish community within which activities are permitted that would otherwise be banned during the Sabbath, Friday sunset to Saturday sundown (called Shabbat in Hebrew and Shabbos in Yiddish), as well as on Yom Kippur. An eruv is typically bounded by existing walls, utility poles, and wires, with additional infrastructure added if necessary to complete the circuit according to *halakha*, Jewish religious law. There's also an eruv that straddles Lakeview and Lincoln Park by the lake, plus others in the northern suburbs of Lincolnwood, Skokie, Buffalo Grove, Northbrook, and Highland Park.

The CDOT staffers were fuzzy on exactly who requested the arch, as well as the function of the eruv, so I reached out to Silverstein for more info. The alderman is Orthodox herself, although not strictly so—she avoids driving on Shabbat, which is prohibited, but wears typical street clothes. She said a member of the West Rogers Park Eruv committee met with CDOT to discuss how to incorporate the bridge into the ritual enclosure.

Transportation department spokesperson Mike Claffey confirmed that, adding that the cost of the arch "was minimal in terms of the project budget."

Neither Silverstein nor CDOT would tell me straight out who the committee representative was. But Silverstein referred me to the Chicago Rabbinical Council for more info on the eruv and other transportation-related matters in the Haredi community.

Rabbi Yona Reiss, chief rabbinical judge at CRC, explained that strict Orthodox Jews, or as he called them "Torah-observant Jews," aren't easily taxonomized into specific classes. Rather, there's a continuum of "different flavors and degrees of dress and practice."

For example, Rabbi Reiss said while all Orthodox Jewish people should strive to dress in a way that "respects modesty and dignity," there are varying opinions on what that means.

NEWS & POLITICS

Observant males cover their heads with a yarmulke out of deference to God, and some wear a *tallit katan*, a version of a prayer shawl, under their garments so that the fringe is visible, “as a reminder to observe all the *mitzvot*,” or biblical commandments. An edict from the book of Leviticus has been translated as “You shall not shave the corners of your head,” which some Haredim interpret as mandating sidelocks and/or beards for those who can grow them.

Strict Orthodox females typically wear long dresses, keep their shoulders and arms covered, and avoid necklines that drop below the collarbone. Married women are supposed to conceal their hair, although some accomplish this by wearing wigs, Reiss said.

During the bridge ribbon-cutting, which took place on a Tuesday, I was surprised to see what appeared to be a Haredi woman jogging on the North Shore Channel Trail in a longish dress, leggings, and a headscarf. But Reiss said, other than during Shabbos, there aren’t any particular restrictions on physical activity and transportation. “As long as you can maintain modesty, exercise is a good thing.”

Of course, on the day of rest it’s another story. Recreation or play is generally frowned upon, with some allowances made for young children. Biking is not permitted, except for toddlers’ tricycles, and there’s no traveling in cars or on transit except for medical emergencies. Therefore, Orthodox Jews tend to plan their lifestyles around walking to synagogue.

When I stopped by the neighborhood on a recent Friday as the sun sank low, the sidewalks were bustling with black-clad men, women, and children hurrying to Shabbat services. The streets were relatively tranquil since their cars were parked.

The ritual perimeter makes it practical to observe Talmudic law, which forbids carrying objects outside of one’s home on the Sabbath, save for the clothes you’re wearing, Reiss explained. The eruv, Hebrew for “mixing,” addresses this rule by symbolically combining all households within the boundaries into one symbolic domestic space. Therefore, within the district it’s acceptable to carry your house key, a prayer book, eyeglasses, or medicine, and push a baby stroller or use a cane, crutches, or a wheelchair.

On the other hand, *muktzeh*, items that can’t be carried on Shabbos, even within one’s home, include money, wallets, purses, phones, writing implements, office keys, and other objects associated with commerce or labor. Even umbrellas are forbidden, which must make walking to synagogue a challenge when there’s

a downpour.

The website for the West Rogers Park Eruv includes a hotline residents can call after 2 PM on Fridays to double-check that the wall, wire, and post perimeter, which is inspected regularly, is still intact. “Please remember that if the eruv is not operational, carrying in the public domain may be a serious transgression,” the site warns.

After calling a few more rabbis listed on the website, I tracked down the person who met with CDOT, a real estate lawyer and eruv committee founder named Robert W. Matanky. He identifies as “a centrist Orthodox Jew—I’m engaged with the world; I’m not insular.”

Matanky was involved in early discussions about the bike bridge back in the mid-2000s, “because it was going to disturb the eruv boundary.” Halakhic law requires that if there is an opening in the ritual enclosure, there must be two objects signifying doorposts, plus a header. “The design was missing the door.”

When Alderman Stone vetoed the span in 2005, he publicly stated multiple reasons for his opposition, none of which made much sense. But Matanky said Stone was hoping to use the money for a pedestrian bridge over the channel a half mile north of Lincoln near Albion Avenue, to provide a shortcut for people walking between residential areas. It’s likely that didn’t happen because the bike path doesn’t exist that far north on the east bank, so the structure would have been useless for making the needed trail connection.

After Alderman Silverstein rebooted the initiative years later, Matanky met with CDOT architects and engineers to request an eruv-friendly design. “I think we came up with something aesthetically very nice, so everybody came out a winner.”

Establishing, inspecting, and maintaining an eruv is a surprisingly complex endeavor. For example, Matanky said that to delineate the southern boundary of the West Rogers Park district years ago, the committee had to get permission from CDOT to attach brackets to existing light poles and string cable on the south side of Peterson from Western Avenue to Lincoln, and then northwest on Lincoln to Kedzie. “That was done without tax money, using contributions from community members.”

But Rabbi Reiss said all that effort is worth it. “Shabbos is a beautiful day, and the eruv enables people to enjoy it to the fullest, in the proper sanctity of the Sabbath.” ■

🐦 @greenfieldjohn

**YOUR PERFECT
WEEKEND**

STARTS AT

VIRTUE CIDER FARM

**CIDER TASTINGS | FARM ANIMALS
NATURE TRAILS | LIVE MUSIC**

VirtueCider.com | (269) 722-3232 | 2170 62nd St, Fennville, MI



Angela Jackson BETTY J. JACKSON

CULTURE

Angela Jackson is Illinois's new poet laureate

How about a stipend?

By **DEANNA ISAACS**

It was great to hear, late last month, that Chicagoan Angela Jackson has been chosen as the new Illinois poet laureate.

Great because Jackson has never wavered from the mission she took on back in the late 1960s, when she was a nascent seed of a poet, nourished by the likes of Hoyt W. Fuller, Haki Madhubuti, Carolyn Rodgers, and Sterling Plumpp at the south-side arts hot house that was OBAC—the Organization of Black American Culture.

“I became a writer, capital W, because of OBAC,” Jackson told me last week. “It was a sacred space,” where work was presented and rigorously critiqued. “We didn’t have to follow the rules of Western literature, but it had to be true to the Black experience and true as a

piece—the way jazz does not follow classical rules but it still has to be true in and of itself, creatively true, on its own terms.”

Also great because Jackson’s still with us. In June, Governor J.B. Pritzker made singer/songwriter John Prine the state’s first honorary poet laureate. It was recognition richly deserved, for lyrics we can’t forget: “You know that old trees just grow stronger / And old rivers grow wilder every day / Old people just grow lonesome . . .”

But it was a posthumous honor: Prine died of COVID-19 in April.

Here’s Jackson, starting from the same subject (from “Miz Sheba Williams: As told to This Reporter from the Community News Front”):

There was murder outside my door.

And no use for age.

Too many twisted in a twisting rage

Or praying they way into designer

jeans

so they can wear somebody else’s

name on they behind.

A brand name.

My mama told me enough

about the days of wearing

somebody else’s name.

There have been just four previous poet laureates. The first was Howard B. Austin, whose satirical ditty urging 57-year-old confirmed bachelor governor Henry Horner to wed inspired the creation of the laureate post in 1936. (“If he aspires to greater heights / He needs must take a wife,” is how that one went.)

Carl Sandburg had the title from 1962 to ’67, and Jackson’s mentor Gwendolyn Brooks held it for more than three decades (she was “my role model and guardian angel,” Jackson says). The most recent laureate was Kevin Stein (2003-2017).

Jackson’s a prolific writer in multiple genres—her body of work includes four poetry books, three novels, four plays, and a Gwendolyn Brooks biography—and she’s collected an armload of literary honors. Since we last spoke, after her first novel was published, she’s added an MFA in creative writing and literature from Bennington College to the master’s she already had from the University of Chicago.

She told me she thought the second master’s degree would help her get a better job, “but it didn’t.” Which brings up a question that I (not she) would like to raise. Poets are legendarily impoverished. Unless, like Prine, they’re able to put their words to music, they’re not likely to make even a pittance from them. When I asked Jackson, now 69, what’s been the hardest part of her writer’s life, she said, “Not having much money. I’ve not been one of those lucky writers who had a very secure job,” though, “if I did, I wouldn’t have been able to write as much as I’ve written.”

“It’s been a trade-off,” she said, though not one she’d change: “Wouldn’t take nothing for my journey now.”

Still, here’s my question: The poet laureate job, if it’s done right, is time- and energy-consuming (with lots of appearances, projects, and interviews like this one), but it pays nothing. Couldn’t we create a stipend for it? Nothing that would seriously impact Illinois’s multibillion-dollar debt load, but enough to, say, provide reasonable compensation for time put in?

And, while we’re at it, how about changing the selection process, which had the state’s first lady perusing recommendations from a search committee and making the final choice. No reflection on M.K. Pritzker, who was ostensibly responsible for this admirable pick, but I can’t think of any reason why the gubernatorial spouse should be the decider. Holiday decorations in the governor’s mansion? OK. Poet laureate? There must be a better way.

@Deannalsaacs

Handsome brick 2-flat extensively updated for savvy investor or owner-occupant.



Super cool tri-level timber loft with
2 garage spaces.



Dramatic designer penthouse with soaring ceilings and amazing views.



Hidden gem of a townhouse
with huge yard.



Best corner of glass in the city.
2-bedroom, 2-bath.



773.404.1144
brad@bradlippitz.com
bradlippitz.com
3323 N. Broadway
20 W. Kinzie St., 15th Fl.

Top 10 Team in Chicago with \$80 million sold in 2019.

COMPASS

Compass Real Estate is a licensed real estate broker with principal office in New York, NY and obe by all applicable Equal Housing Opportunity laws. All material presented herein is intended for informational purposes only. Information is compiled from sources deemed reliable but is subject to errors, omissions, changes in price, condition, sale, or withdrawal without notice. No statement is made as to the accuracy of any description. All measurements and square footages are approximate. This is not intended to solicit property already listed. Nothing herein shall be construed as legal, accounting or other professional advice outside the realm of real estate brokerage.

WBEZ91.5 *VOCALO*
TUNE IN FOR A SPECIAL BROADCAST



A CHARLES DICKENS' CHRISTMAS CAROL

AN AUDIO PLAY 🎧

DIRECTED BY **JESSICA THEBUS**

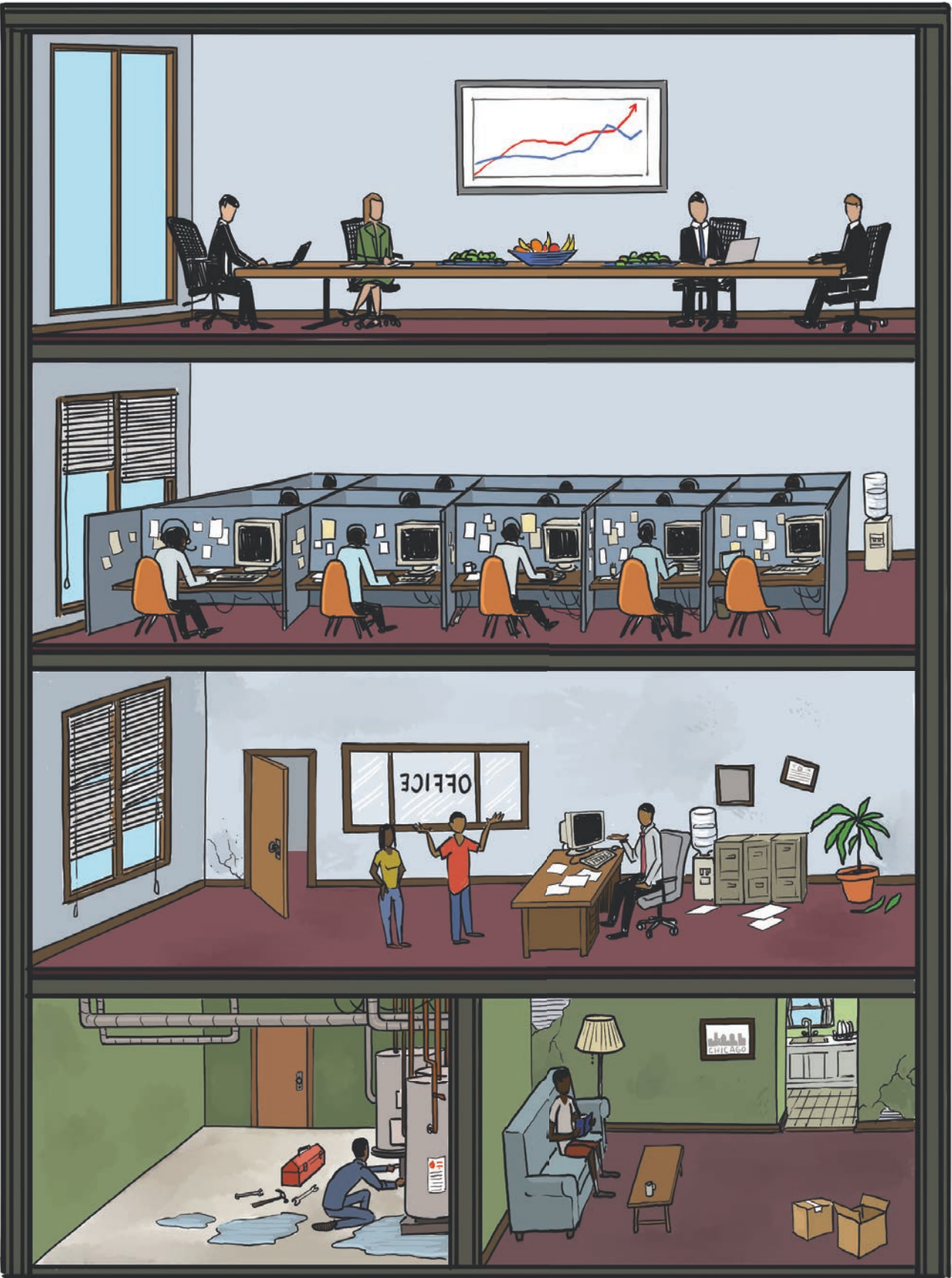
**DECEMBER 24 AT 3PM AND
DECEMBER 25 AT 11AM**



THEATRE
GOODMAN

MORE INFO: WBEZ.ORG/CHRISTMAS

BANK OF AMERICA 
GOODMAN THEATRE MAJOR CORPORATE SPONSOR



‘AN CASTE

Current and former employees of Pangea, the city’s top evictor, describe racism, workplace segregation, and a “toxic” culture.

By MAYA DUKMASOVA

Since protests against the police killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis spurred a reckoning over racism and white supremacy in almost every industry, employees at companies around the country have come forward demanding changes in corporate culture that leaves people of color, and especially Black people, feeling unwelcome, undervalued, and often actually underpaid. The real estate industry is no exception.

In September the *Reader* was alerted to two complaints, one filed with the city’s Commission on Human Relations and the other with the Illinois Department of Human Rights, detailing discrimination and racist statements made by high-level managers at Pangea, one of Chicago’s biggest corporate landlords. Until the start of the coronavirus pandemic, the company was the city’s most prolific filer of eviction cases. Its apartment holdings are concentrated largely in Black neighborhoods on the south and west sides of the city and in nearby suburbs, now totaling 9,400 units in 492 buildings. The company also has several thousand more units in Indianapolis and Baltimore.

The complaints were filed by Armando Magana, 45, the chief maintenance supervisor at Pangea in Chicago who’d been with the company since 2010.

JUSTIN SANTORA

ABSOLUTE SYSTEM’

He’s worked in various roles and received promotions and bonuses, most recently in February, Magana writes. “Notwithstanding my exceptional performance, Pangea has repeatedly discriminated against me because of my Hispanic ethnicity and my Mexican national origin. Throughout my employment, Pangea has also subjected me to a hostile work environment based on numerous derisive and derogatory statements made by Pangea’s managers and executives regarding my ethnicity and national origin.”

Magana’s complaint includes several examples of such statements from vice president of operations Derek Reich and CEO Pete Martay. He claims that in 2017 Reich “told me that I should avoid being seen working with an African-American work colleague if I did not want to be viewed in the same way as that ‘lazy nigger.’”

Magana details two occasions in 2018 when Reich “suggested hiring ‘illegals’ because they will accept less compensation,” and resisted Magana’s recommendations for which employees should get raises, allegedly saying, “aren’t these guys illegal?”

Further in the complaints he recounts a 2019 meeting in which management for a newly acquired building near Loyola University on the north side was allegedly discussed. “My African American colleague asked, ‘who will be managing the building,’ to which Mr. Reich responded, ‘they’ve never seen a Regional Manager of *your kind* in that area.’ I asked about getting access to the roof top, to which Mr. Martay stated, ‘Yeah I can imagine Armando showing up with his trash can and saying “Hello I’m

Armando, the janitor here to clean up after you.’”

Later that year, Magana alleges he “met with Mr. Reich at a property that Pangea had recently begun to manage. During a discussion regarding employee staff assignments, Mr. Reich remarked that ‘Mexicans are for custodial and maintenance, Blacks for property management, and Whites for the back office, that’s it.’” The following month Magana alleges that Martay said to him, in front of other employees, “I should make you pull your fucking tools back out and make you clean shit out of the fucking tubs, like you used to.”

Magana writes that he reported Martay’s “derogatory comments” to Reich and both supervisors’ comments to Pangea’s HR manager Lori Bysong as well as the company’s CFO Patrick Borchard and cofounder and former CEO Steve Joung. “Mr. Joung listened to me, then responded by saying that he doubted workplace discrimination was occurring.”

Magana claims in the complaint that at the end of 2019 he also had a conversation with Pangea’s operations manager Sean McQuade about hiring and pay for new workers, requesting \$22/hour for one of them. “Mr. McQuade responded by asking ‘Do you know if he’s illegal? Do you think he has papers? . . . Do you think this guy is worth \$22/hour?’” Again, Magana claims he reported these comments to HR, Pangea’s in-house attorney Jennifer Dean, and other supervisors.

“Despite having complained on multiple occasions directly to multiple members of Pangea management, no one at the Compa-

ny ever responded to, investigated, or otherwise communicated with me regarding my several complaints,” Magana writes. “Rather, Mr. Reich continues to make derogatory, discriminatory comments toward me. Specifically, on May 12, 2020, Mr. Reich called me and stated, ‘stop treating me like a shine. Last time I checked I was white.’”

In both an internal e-mail obtained by the *Reader* and in an e-mailed statement from CEO Pete Martay, Pangea has denied Magana’s allegations and said he’s refused to cooperate in the company’s internal efforts to investigate.

“Pangea Properties has zero tolerance for racist or discriminatory behavior,” Martay wrote to the *Reader*. “We take allegations of this nature very seriously. As a result, we hired a neutral investigator to carry out a prompt and thorough investigation and have also engaged legal representation to defend the company against allegations we believe are baseless. The complainant and his witnesses have refused multiple requests to participate in our investigation.”

The *Reader* also presented the company with an opportunity to respond to additional allegations made by ten other current and former employees about Pangea’s corporate culture. These included vivid descriptions of demeaning statements by Reich and other supervisors, as well as allegations of segregated and demeaning working conditions. “We categorically deny the claims in the complaint and also the statements made against us by former employees,” wrote Martay. Neither Reich nor McQuade, whose conduct Magana also referenced in his complaint, responded to a request for comment.

Hostile work environments are both ubiquitous and difficult to reform. Their toxicity can be hard to pin down and prove on paper, especially when corporate promotions and official praise are interspersed with interpersonal disrespect and disregard. As a reckoning over the prejudices endemic to white-dominated workplaces roils the private and public sectors, employees of color from businesses and institutions as varied as Adidas, LinkedIn, *Vogue*, the San Francisco health department, and Loyola University have begun speaking out about the racial microaggressions, gaslighting, and harassment that defines office culture for them.

Even as he received glowing performance reviews, Magana could also feel hostility from management. For example, in an August 2013 e-mail obtained by the *Reader*, Reich wrote a brief note to another regional manager. The subject line read, “Armando was excited about converting to Islam . . .” and inside the body of the e-mail the sentence ended “ . . . Until he found out you can’t eat pork.” Attached was a photo of Magana, grinning, in a little white hat reminiscent of a kufi skull cap.

When asked about the e-mail Magana said he was dismayed at being the target of a crude joke that appeared to be both Islamophobic and about his weight. “I never thought he was gonna take a picture and send it,” he said with a grim chuckle as we looked at the image over beers at the nearly deserted patio of the Promontory in Hyde Park. Magana wore a black valve mask and a short sleeve blue polo, apparently un-



continued from 17

bothered by the biting gusts of wind on that late September afternoon. As he stared at the photo he said the fact that it had been e-mailed was unusual; in his experience Reich rarely left a paper trail of demeaning comments. “It was always phone calls with Derek,” Magana said. “He really doesn’t like to put anything in e-mail. If you send him an e-mail, he’ll call. If you meet him in the field, he’ll make those comments.”

As documented in his complaints, Magana attempted to have the “discriminatory communications and behavior” he experienced addressed internally, but complaints to HR and leaders of the company didn’t help. Finally he started working with attorney Marc Siegel to appeal to external authorities to intervene. The company soon also hired an outside attorney to help handle the situation.

Pangea’s lawyers “kept telling [Siegel] that I was exaggerating and they always treated me good and they weren’t being racist toward me,” Magana told the *Reader*. “Long story short, I told my attorney I’m not gonna play this game, I’m gonna file this with the state and city and I’m gonna make it public.”

By late spring the stress of working at Pangea had intensified due to the coronavirus pandemic. “I broke down because when the COVID started Derek was just calling me every other day, every other day: ‘What are you doing?’ I’d say ‘We’re working . . . but we don’t have any sanitizing supplies. We don’t have masks.’”

Magana said Pangea didn’t offer hazard pay. Some field employees took time off because they were scared to go back into the

apartment buildings, especially when word got around that tenants were falling ill. Magana says Reich didn’t seem to care. “It was like, ‘All these guys need to come back to work.’ I’m like, ‘Derek we’re all working, there’s some people who took off because they’re scared.’”

Magana said that Reich demanded that he choose five of his staff to fire as part of a company effort to reduce the employee headcount to below 500 so that Pangea could qualify for a Paycheck Protection Program loan from the federal government.

He said that in late March Reich called him. “He says, ‘You got any shitty people working for you? Give me five.’ I’m like, ‘I don’t have any shitty people working for me.’ He’s like, ‘Well, give me five.’”

The *Reader* obtained an e-mail Magana sent to Reich the next day, listing four employees who changed positions in the company without being replaced and one who was about to leave Pangea anyway. “There’s your four plus one, he’s already

out the door,” Magana recalled thinking. He said that after that he got another phone call from Reich who demanded he name five additional people to fire because Pangea’s employee count was at 512.

Magana said he submitted another list of names. “I was destroyed about that,” he said. According to records released by the Small Business Administration in July, Pangea was awarded a \$5-\$10 million loan through the PPP program. They listed an employee count of 494.

By June, Magana needed a break. The stress of the job was getting to him and affecting his family, and he took a leave of absence for a month and a half. “I got kind of depressed, stressed out, I was trying to take care of my health,” he said. “I found out my son was depressed, so I had to dedicate myself to him.”

Magana said things got worse for him at Pangea after he came back to work in July. There were sudden extra meetings where he was questioned about his work. He felt

increasingly micromanaged.

Nevertheless, Magana was still determined to continue working at the company, where he was making \$115,000 in salary, got bonuses, and to which he’d devoted a decade of his life. “I’m happy where I’m at, I’m good at what I do, I’ve done nothing wrong,” he said.

Word about Magana’s complaint began to get out at Pangea, and e-mails from pseudonymised accounts suddenly appeared in all field employees’ inboxes, sharing Magana’s complaints and encouraging them to file their own. The company quickly deleted these e-mails from employees’ inboxes, however. In a September 30 e-mail to all field employees obtained by the *Reader*, Martay acknowledged that deletion, adding that the “current employee” who complained about mistreatment “refused to cooperate and will not speak to the independent investigator” Pangea hired to look into the allegations. Though Martay didn’t refer to Magana by name in this e-mail, Magana says he felt the CEO’s message was meant to undermine him. “We categorically deny the claims made in the complaint and have engaged legal representation to defend the company against them,” Martay wrote.

By the beginning of October, Magana felt he could no longer remain at Pangea. “I cannot continue to work under hostile environment with retaliation,” he wrote to me in a text message. Though he technically resigned from his job himself, his attorney argues that he was “constructively discharged” by management because of the “discrimination and harassment and retaliation he faced at work.”

According to legal precedent established by the U.S. Supreme Court in the 2006 *Burlington Northern & Santa Fe Railway Co. v.*



White decision, the definition of retaliation for complaints about workplace discrimination is broad. “It could be making your work life more difficult. It could be micromanaging you. It could be icing you out—anything that could make a reasonable person feel dissuaded from bringing a complaint,” said Siegel. “It doesn’t have to be a termination or written suspension.”

In the weeks after learning about Magana’s complaint, the *Reader* spoke with ten other current and former employees (all of them African American) who detailed similar allegations and confirmed Magana’s description of the work environment at Pangea. All of them confirmed the existence of an unofficial but clearly visible racial hierarchy at the company: The day-to-day management of buildings and tenant relations is assigned to Black and Latinx workers, while the corporate back office and C-suite are overwhelmingly white. Indeed Pangea even has separate landing pages presenting its field employees, who appear to be mostly people of color, and a selection of its corporate staff, most of whom appear to be white.

“It’s set up in an absolute caste system,” said one current employee who didn’t want to share his name for fear of retaliation but who said he’s worked at the company in various roles for several years. “If you took a picture of the forearm of everyone who worked there, I could with 95 percent certainty tell you where they work.”

The employee said he felt that Pangea wanted to present itself as a Black-owned or Black-led organization to the public because “any time there’s a politician or political event they send younger Black males to send the perception that there are young Black men doing well in this business when in actuality they’re underpaying.” He added that while it’s possible for African Americans to move up in the company within roles in the field, promotions into the corporate office for a worker like him are unthinkable.

He and others said that the company’s internal segregation became particularly apparent when, for a time, its customer service call center (staffed almost exclusively by people of color) was colocated with its corporate office at 640 N. LaSalle. He described stepping out of the elevator to see signs directing call center employees in one direction, and everyone else in another. “They could have said everybody Brown to the left, everybody white to the right.

It was reminiscent of Jim Crow,” he said, adding that the corporate staff “didn’t share entrances, bathrooms, or break rooms with employees of color.”

Magana and several other employees who spoke with the *Reader* described the call center as a room encased in glass in the middle of the corporate office. An ex-employee who also didn’t want to share his name said the call center “was like a cage” with a door that locked from the inside, preventing call

kegs, Keurigs, Kashi bars, fruits, craft teas, people have bottles of whiskey and scotch in their offices,” he said. “The people in the call center, all Black and a few Hispanics, could see all that stuff from the call center section but weren’t allowed to use any of that stuff. And our coffee is in a little rudimentary break room with a cheap machine and cheap packets of sugar. I see that as racism.”

Still, Tucker said he didn’t have personal problems with managers at Pangea until

He described one incident in which Hurford had an altercation with some kids who’d been hanging around on a corner near one of Pangea’s apartment complexes. “She goes out there and starts yelling at these kids, cussing at the kids, and one of the kids just says, ‘Suck my D.’ She responds, to a teenager, ‘I would never do that ‘cause your D is too little.’ To a child. She was at least 40.” (Hurford, who no longer works at Pangea, did not respond to multiple requests for an interview.)

Tucker said Hurford demeaned the way he and other staff spoke with tenants, who he said were mostly Black and very poor. “If a tenant comes in mad and we talk to them in a language that’s gonna calm them down she’ll say, ‘Why are you talking to them like a thug?’” he said. “[Hurford was] someone from outside the culture coming out and making every comment, like, ‘This is ghetto,’ or ‘Why do you guys shake hands like that?’”

Pierre Torchenot, another former employee who worked as an office manager under Hurford, said that cultural competency among workers who knew the Baltimore community well was not valued, and that Hurford policed the language and behavior of her staff according to white cultural norms.

“I’m Haitian and I’ve been in the Baltimore community long enough. There’s a culture there that I’m familiar with,” Torchenot explained. “There’s a certain way you address [residents] and it makes them feel at home. We’re not saying anything that’s not professional, but [Hurford] would come to me saying, ‘Why do you talk that way? Is this something like with your homeboys?’ or ‘Is that the hood talk?’”

Torchenot left his job in 2017. Hurford “was driving me nuts, making my life miserable,” he said. “Before I left I wrote a letter to the company’s head letting him know what’s happening, and the entire board.”

Tucker and Torchenot both said that complaining about Hurford’s behavior to upper management didn’t yield improved working conditions. “When we had a problem with Brenda, Derek was the next person to talk to, and Derek empowered Brenda,” Torchenot said. “We always felt that Derek was an enabler.”

Tucker said Reich himself would “talk to us in a condescending tone.” He recalled a meeting in August 2017 at which Reich “was cussing at” property manager Jeffrey Knox.

“If a tenant comes in mad and we talk to them in a language that’s gonna calm them down she’ll say, ‘Why are you talking to them like a thug?’”

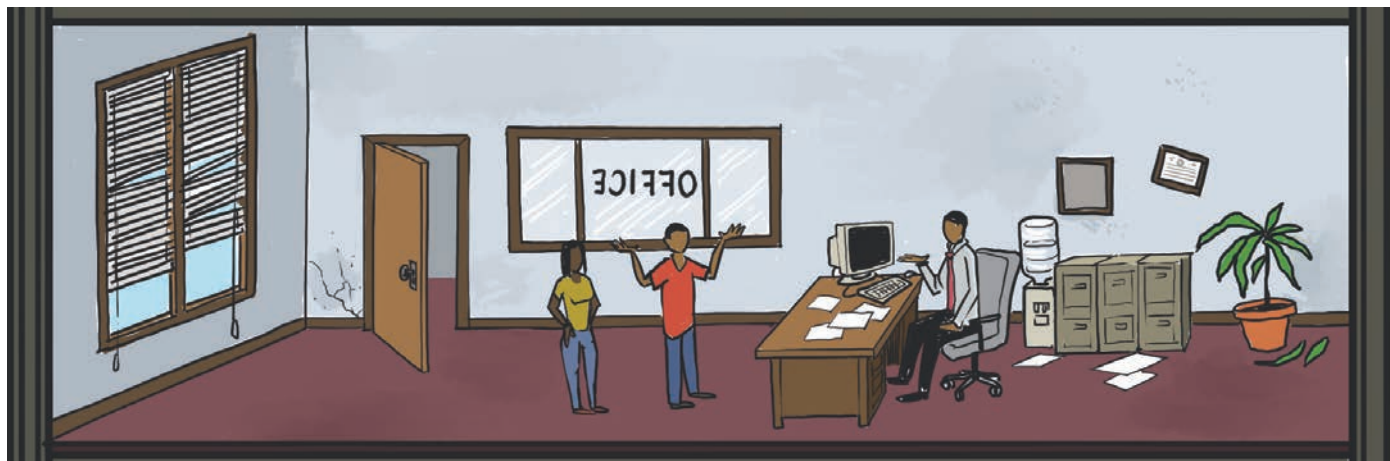
—Robert Tucker

center workers from entering the corporate office, while allowing workers from the corporate side to enter the call center. “To see other Black people pretty much caged up was embarrassing,” he said.

Robert Tucker, who began his career at Pangea at the call center in Chicago in 2015 said that it felt “like a zoo.” He was particularly bothered by the visible disparity in the amenities offered to employees on either side of the glass. “You got one side with beer

he took a promotion and transferred to the Baltimore office two and a half years later. It was there that he first encountered Derek Reich, who oversaw the Indianapolis and Baltimore markets before becoming the vice president of operations for the whole company. Most problematic for Tucker, however, was his direct supervisor, Brenda Hurford.

“She would disrespect us, the workers, the tenants, and make comments about tenants being ‘ghetto,’” Tucker recalled.



continued from 19

Tucker recalled that Reich was unhappy about something Knox had said and “was saying, ‘I don’t want to hear excuses, you get your job done, if you don’t fucking like it you can go fucking quit and I can go get someone else.’ It was just pure disrespect.”

Knox himself, who’d started working in maintenance at the company in 2015 and was quickly promoted to property management, said he didn’t feel that Reich and Hurford’s disrespect was racially motivated, but that the work environment was toxic. He, as well as the three other former Pangea Baltimore employees, noted that the one white woman who worked as a property manager seemed to get a lot more leeway from management. He and other Black staffers, meanwhile, felt chronically overworked. Knox said he complained about Hurford’s behavior to Pangea’s HR manager Lori Byson. “She would always act like she was interested,” Knox said, adding that it didn’t seem like anything ever came of these complaints. (Byson left Pangea in September. She declined to comment for this story.)

Knox quit his job after the meeting at which Reich dressed him down over a conference call line in front of other colleagues. “I was suggesting to Derek a few things we could probably try to do differently, and he told me I need to shut the hell up and go along with the program.” On August 21, 2017, after being denied an exit interview, he sent management an e-mail regarding his experience working for Pangea. He complained about Hurford and urged the company to devote more resources and manpower to building maintenance.

“Work is not getting done . . . drain back-up not being addressed for days on end,” he

wrote. Hurford forwarded Knox’s e-mail to Tucker and another employee. “For all the shit he talked about maintenance . . . yet only my name is mentioned LMFAO,” she wrote. “Not that it really matters.”

Tucker submitted this e-mail and myriad other documentation about Hurford’s conduct in an appeal to the Maryland Department of Labor, which initially denied him unemployment benefits because Pangea fired him for “inappropriate behavior towards management.” Tucker said this was retaliation for complaining about the working conditions. He ultimately won the appeal.

Pangea’s current and former employees contended that the workplace culture within the company was reflective of how management viewed their tenants. Most of the former employees who spoke with the *Reader* were fired or said they felt they had no choice but to resign; all of them said that sticking up for residents or pushing back on management’s directives to cut corners caused them to face hostility from their bosses.

“They fired me because there were things that I didn’t like going on at the company as far as how they were treating certain residents in certain areas,” said Phillip Jenkins, a former property manager who worked at Pangea in Chicago between 2014 and 2019. “A lot of residents couldn’t get any resolution to the maintenance issues in their units.” He said he’d sometimes bring these issues to the attention of his direct supervisors’ bosses. “They called it breaking the chain of command.”

Wanda Kelley, who worked as both a leasing agent and a property manager at

Pangea in Baltimore between 2013 and 2017, said she was fired because she consistently urged management to address maintenance problems and health hazards. Her principal worry was mold in the 139-unit Pangea Oaks apartment complex. She said both Reich and Dave Sonnenberg, a former regional manager at Pangea, told her not to cite mold in internal maintenance work orders.

“They kept saying it was dirt,” Kelley said. “They told me not to put mold on the paperwork, they told me to put dirt.”

John Naylor first moved into the Pangea Oaks complex in June of 2014. “I started noticing the mold a couple of months after,” he told the *Reader* in an interview, confirming that the company didn’t adequately deal with the problem. The *Reader* obtained a maintenance ticket Kelley had created regarding his basement-level unit that August. “Unit has black spots spreading up the wall in kitchen - was treated once and it is back,” Kelley wrote in the ticket.

Because he is paralyzed and uses a wheelchair he had to live in one of the ADA accessible basement units, Naylor explained. The mold “actually came through the drywall,” he recalled, adding that furniture and objects next to the apartment’s outer walls were also colonized by mold. “They painted over it and it came back through the paint.” (Multiple Chicago tenants interviewed during a *Reader* investigation of Pangea last year also said that the company painted over mold.)

Naylor said he asked Pangea to hire a qualified mold specialist to fully assess the severity of the issue but that to his knowledge the company never did that. He said Pangea’s maintenance staff ultimately determined that the only way to get rid of

the mold would be to tear out the apartment walls. The company ended up moving him into a different basement apartment three doors down where he continued to have problems with mold in addition to sewage backups in the bathtub. “It seemed to be all of us that were down on the bottom floor [were dealing with the same problems],” Naylor said. He no longer rents from Pangea.

Kelley said she still knows tenants at Pangea’s Baltimore properties who she’d worked with as a leasing agent, and that some of them have been struggling with mold and flooding in their units for years. She said they couldn’t leave, however, because of the debt they’d accrued with the company.

When she was fired in 2017, Kelley said Reich flew in from Chicago to do it in person. She said that Hurford (whom she described as “very disrespectful to the tenants” but with whom she managed to have a functional working relationship) told her before the meeting that she was being let go. “I didn’t know I was going to get fired until that morning. [Hurford] sat down in front of me and said, ‘I’m sorry you’re leaving me, you’re one of my best and the reason they’re getting rid of you is because of your age.’” At the time, Kelley was 61. “After I was let go we kept in contact and she profusely apologized and said her hands were tied.”

As for Reich, Kelley said she felt that he viewed her and the other Black workers “like we was his slaves. We were to keep our mouth shut and do whatever he said. . . . When we started speaking out against Pangea that’s when they had problems with us.”

The anonymous current Chicago employee said the company takes advantage of both Black workers in neighborhoods where there aren’t many jobs, and Black tenants who don’t have a lot of affordable housing options. “I think they’re slumlords. They make money off minorities,” he said. “They built their whole business model of people who are poor and struggling . . . they know the tenants need them, not the other way around. That’s why they’re so quick to evict people. They own so much property in our neighborhoods and make so much money off of us.”

The former employee who also wished to remain anonymous added that the company scrimped on maintenance. He recalled an instance in which he asked Reich why the company preferred to patch problems like leaky roofs and plumbing instead of doing

more extensive repairs. He said Reich responded: “It’s not worth it to fix it because [the tenants will] just fuck it up anyway.”

Magana, too, confirmed that this was management’s attitude toward maintenance. Their priority, he said, was to spend as little money as possible from quarter to quarter. “Even before Pete used to be the CEO he would say, ‘We’d rather spend \$200 patching the roof here and there than just spend \$40,000 at once and fix it.’ So it was always patching, painting, Band-Aids.”

“They would joke about people being poor,” Robert Tucker, the former Baltimore property manager recalled about Reich and Hurford. Meanwhile, he said, tenants weren’t getting adequate service. “When a stove goes out they have to wait. If a refrigerator goes out and the food gets spoiled, Derek and Brenda don’t want to give people credit for the food.”

Torchenot, his former colleague, recalled an incident in which Hurford reprimanded him for handing out bottled drinking water to residents whose water was shut off due to burst pipes over the course of an entire weekend. “I thought if these people don’t have water to bathe they should at least have some water to drink. I distributed some water for them to drink but that didn’t sit right with Brenda,” he said.

Tucker said that Hurford’s way of relating with tenants put both her and other staff in danger. “If you’ve ever seen *The Wire*, these are the neighborhoods we worked in, I’m not exaggerating,” he said. “The Freddie Gray riots were birthed two blocks from one of our properties. . . . We had to stop tenants from, excuse my language, whooping [Hurford’s] ass because she would disrespect people. These are already people who are at the bottom. They’re at the bottom. And she would say things to people not realizing

that we’re in the poorest part of the city. You don’t know what people went through today.”

“I remember one time [Hurford] flew off the handle with a resident and they was about to fight in the office, we had to step in between them,” Knox said. “It felt like [management] put our lives in jeopardy. We lived in the neighborhood and [tenants] would see us daily.” Kelley, who lived near one of Pangea’s apartment complexes, agreed. She said she was once personally threatened by a tenant and had her tires slashed. She chalked up the aggression to frustration with the company.

Several employees who spoke to the *Reader* said they themselves had tried to pursue legal remedies to the discrimination they felt they faced at Pangea through the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission or Occupational Safety and Health Administration, or knew others who had. However, these agencies do not make records of filed complaints publicly available unless they file suit against employers—something that happens very rarely. EEOC lawsuits against employers are “usually a last resort after other outcomes are attempted,” explained spokeswoman Kimberly Smith-Brown in an e-mail. The agency has never sued Pangea and couldn’t confirm the existence of any complaints against the company.

Thomas Clay, a former Pangea maintenance regional manager in Indianapolis, said he’d filed an EEOC complaint after Pangea fired him in 2014. Even though he was a supervisor and one of the company’s first employees in Indianapolis, Clay said that he was getting a lower hourly wage than white and Latinx maintenance techs who were working under him. He said he didn’t have an attorney to help with the EEOC process

and didn’t pursue further remedies after the agency, unable to reach one of his managers, dismissed his complaint.

“I was just glad to get out of there,” Clay said. “That job made me realize how much I was underpaid, how much I was being used. Because of my race I was being treated like that.”

Sources told the *Reader* that several women employees at Pangea in Chicago had made EEOC complaints regarding gender-based discrimination as well, but that these were settled privately and involved nondisclosure agreements.

“There was at one point in time all male zone leaders, all the office managers were female. Very few female property managers but a whole lot of female leasing agents, and to me that was very sexist,” said Christna Turner, who was a leasing agent in Pangea’s Chicago office between 2014 and 2016. She said she left the company because she was severely underpaid. She said that descriptions of Pangea’s corporate culture as a caste system “ring true.”

Reflecting on his time with the company, Clay said he felt Pangea had a good business model—buying run-down apartment buildings and complexes, fixing them up, leasing at an affordable price. “What they did for the city was a good idea,” he said, “but they took a good idea and messed it up by putting their buddies in . . . none of them was qualified to run this company.”

Magana echoed this sentiment. “Pangea was built on friendship—college guys and buddy-buddy stuff,” he said. “I don’t think Pete got the position because he knew what he was doing. I think he got it based on friendship. He’s very close with Derek, Derek grew up with [founder Al Goldstein]. [Former CEO Steve Joung] and Al were college buddies . . . they forget that we’re all getting salaries

from our tenants.”

Magana is now in the process of filing amended complaints with the city and state to include the allegations of his “constructive discharge.” It could be months before the agencies complete their investigations, but Magana says he’s not worried about the long wait and has started to look for a new job.

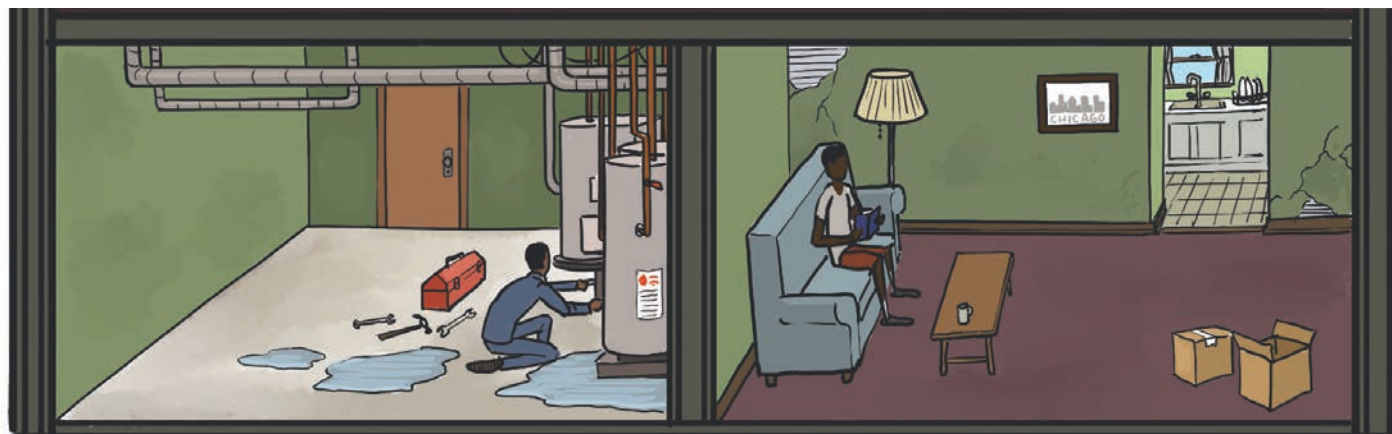
In October, Pangea named him in a lawsuit alleging breach of noncompete and nonsolicitation clauses in his contract because, while still employed at the company, Magana and another former Pangea employee registered two LLCs with the state of Illinois for the purpose of construction work and pest management. Magana says they started these companies a few years ago when they thought they might lose their jobs at Pangea, but never actually did any business and weren’t competing with Pangea.

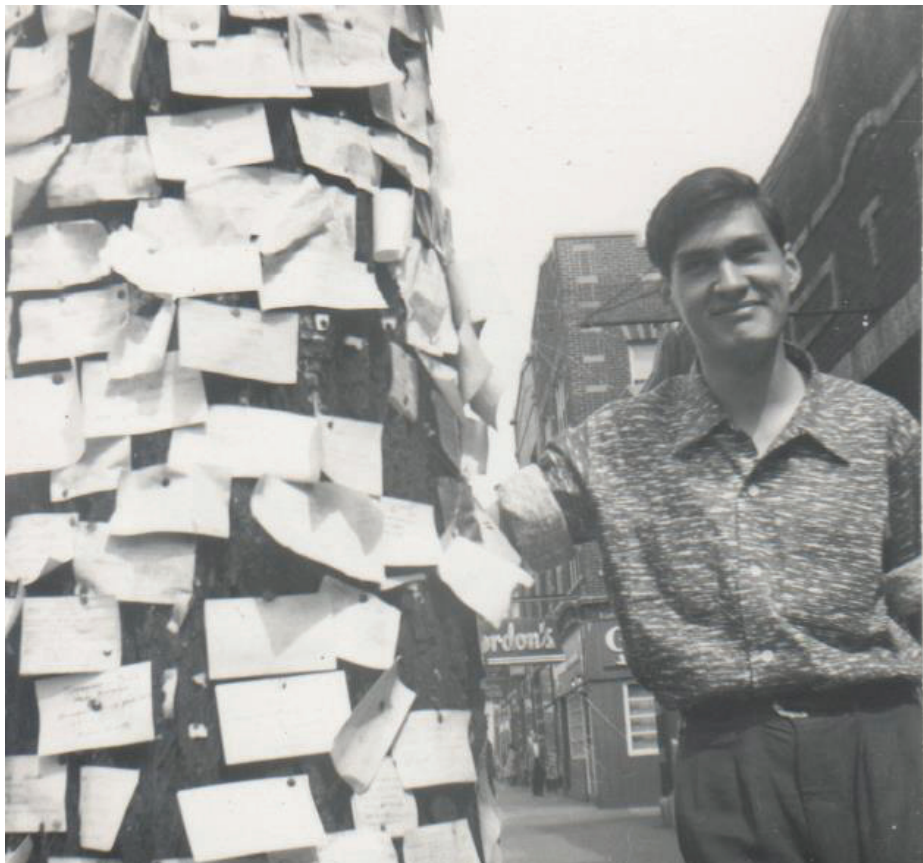
“I’m not nervous because I never did anything wrong,” he said. “We only opened [the LLCs], we never did anything with it.” Magana said he thinks the lawsuit is meant to scare him and dissuade other Pangea employees from bringing discrimination claims. “It was done to intimidate the other maintenance managers that were under me, because they did call them in [to a meeting] and tell them that they added me to the lawsuit.”

When he looks back on the last decade, Magana said it was hard for him to have to leave a company he helped build—a workplace to which, especially in the early years, he devoted tremendous time, often at the expense of his family.

“I started with Pangea and was being too loyal, and [my kids] basically grew up without me,” he said. Though he recalls putting in as many as 150 hours biweekly in some periods, and seven-day work weeks at \$12 an hour, for years it felt like most of his colleagues and him were rowing in the same direction. He reminisced about generous “morale” budgets and the ability to reward and promote good workers. In the last few years, though, he said he came to understand that to the top management “I’m just another lazy guy running around.” Though he’d wanted to stay and fight for better conditions when he first started filing his complaints, now he says he’s relieved about leaving Pangea. “My life is getting back to normal, I’m more happy, stress free.” ■

🐦 @mdoukmas





Art Castillo at the Message Tree, which used to stand at West 57th Street and South Kimbark Avenue. © COURTESY OF JOHN OTTENHEIMER

DIVE BAR HISTORY

The remarkable life of Art Castillo and *Moulin Jimmy's*

Tacked to the wall of a beloved Hyde Park dive, a time capsule hides in plain sight.

By HANNAH EDGAR

“Looking for someone?” He blends in with the rest of the bar so much that I almost don’t notice him at first. My inquisitor looks like every man of a certain age at Jimmy’s: craggy, lichenous, and too observant for his own good. It’s a gray January day, just weeks before the 55th Street bar would retreat into COVID-forced hibernation, and I am doing just that—searching.

The object of my fixation is a panorama, roughly two-by-five-foot, depicting a lively

night at Jimmy’s in the mid-1950s. You’d think you couldn’t miss it—the tableau is nailed to the wall facing the front door—and yet, I never noticed it in my years living in Hyde Park, nor have any of my friends. The black and white ink style and detail of its 100-plus subjects is remarkable, even Hirschfeldian. The patrons aren’t celebrities by any means, but they might have been minor ones to anyone living in Hyde Park at that time: You can spot Andrew Duncan (a founding member of Second City’s predecessor, the

Compass Players) in a faux-military costume; Joffre Stewart (a poet, pacifist, and pamphleteer immortalized in Allen Ginsburg’s *Howl*) emptying a trash can on some men in suits; Ed Bland and Nelam Hill (directors-to-be of the seminal 1959 film *The Cry of Jazz*) debating at a front table; among countless others.

It’s an astonishing artifact, a historian’s dream. But age has done the yellowing, fading display no kindnesses. The boldest part of the frontispiece is a signature in the lower right corner: “Art Castillo.”

When he drew *Moulin Jimmy’s*, as the original artwork is fondly known to its few surviving subjects, Arturo (later Arthur) Teodoro Castillo was a 24-year-old contradiction—not a University of Chicago student, but part of the institution’s intellectual orbit; a keen observer of Hyde Park’s social intricacies, but not much of a talker himself; a caricaturist who regaled his friends with inked likenesses, but who considered himself primarily a writer.

At least, that’s how his best friend John Ottenheimer remembers him. A retired architect, Ottenheimer once apprenticed for Frank Lloyd Wright; he designed the lettering on the Guggenheim’s façade. Now 87, Ottenheimer lives alone on Whidbey Island, a sleepy isle in Puget Sound. He’s the keeper of Castillo’s archives—sketches, correspondence, novel and libretto drafts, photos, and mountains upon mountains of books.

“A lot of the story of Art is all of the people he knew, and he was interested in people,” Ottenheimer tells me during one of our half-dozen phone conversations. “That’s why his caricatures are all so accurate: He perceived not only their features in detail, but he also perceived their inner nature.”

Born to a white Kansan mother and Filipino immigrant father in 1931, Castillo grew up in nearby Washington Park, Woodlawn, and Bronzeville, among the most racially integrated neighborhoods in the city; the year Art was born, the Castillos were one of several Filipino and mixed-race families on their block on East 55th Place. He attended Oakenwald Elementary in Bronzeville (now demolished) before his parents relocated to Jefferson Park.

Castillo was never one to conform to expectations, parental, societal, or otherwise. He never graduated from Taft High School

(likely too bored or too socially alienated to stick around) and went to dramatic lengths to dodge the draft, from fleeing the FBI to staging his own suicide. He eventually made his way back to the south side and fell in with a band of misfits living in Whitman House, an integrated, co-ed cooperative at 5721 S. Kenwood. Ottenheimer was among them—“and if you couldn’t find us at Whitman House, you could find us at Jimmy’s.”

Then and now, no Hyde Parker calls the bar “Woodlawn Tap,” though that might be the watering hole’s formal name. To patrons, it’s always been Jimmy’s, after the late James Wilson, its longtime owner and barkeep. He’s in *Moulin Jimmy’s* too, of course, cradling heaps of cash behind the bar. Over his shoulder is Art’s sendup of a backlit University of Chicago seal (here a cooked bird instead of a phoenix), which still looms over the center of the bar. Ottenheimer’s likeness shows off a pamphlet titled “Wright Is Love” in the bottom-right corner of the tableau. Nearby is George Tolley, an economics professor emeritus at U of C and acquaintance of Castillo’s. He still lives in Hyde Park, but spoke to me while hunkered down in Michigan.

“It was a very lively place, with lots of talented and colorful people around, students and non-students alike,” Tolley recalls. “That was probably a pretty representative group in that tableau.”

Before completing the Jimmy’s panorama in 1955, Castillo captured a morsel of Hyde Park life in a similar drawing of Steinway’s Drugstore, a long-gone deli at 57th and Kenwood—this ink piece is now part of Ottenheimer’s private collection. Many of the same figures in the Steinway’s drawing—which Art signed “Salvador Dilly”—return in *Moulin Jimmy’s*. Though he sold prints of *Moulin Jimmy’s* for \$1, neither were commissioned works; to Castillo, the panoramas were more or less anthropological studies. Another acquaintance recalls that Castillo obsessively drew “sociograms,” charts that mapped the social networks of other Hyde Parkers.

Castillo’s irrepressible impulse to taxonomize other people crops up again and again in his work. At the time of his death in 1962, he’d mapped out an ambitious, *Ulysses*-esque novel outlining different archetypes of human nature, lifting concepts from philosophy, psychology, art, literature, and more. He hoped it would be his magnum opus.

“[*The Rite of Spring*] is a sober and penetrating study of the Cultural Deviant, of those keenly sensitive and intelligent indi-



Art Castillo included likenesses of friends John Ottenheimer and George Tolley in *Moulin Jimmy's*. HANNAH EDGAR

place where “Black and white united against the poor.”

“Frankly, the neighborhood today is a shadow of its former self,” Tolley tells me. “It was a more heterogeneous place before, more avant garde. It might have even been ahead of Berkeley.”

Many disenchanted Whitmanites fled for the coasts—some to New York, and others, in fact, to Berkeley. Castillo did both, spending stints in Greenwich Village, the Bay Area, and Mexico between the completion of *Moulin Jimmy's* and his death from colon cancer seven years later. His mother Dorothy had moved to Kansas some years after becoming widowed; by then divorced and alone, Art followed her there to live out his final days.

Despite his bleak prognosis, Castillo's final letters, like so much of his correspondence, fixate on the future—on new projects, the particulars of his legacy, conversations with friends. In his final letter to Ottenheimer, dated March 1962, he inquires after the state of some treasured items and urges his friend to keep writing him. “When you return in May, you may expect to find me as you left me, still bed-ridden,” Castillo laments. “I am beginning to look dismally ahead to a long career as an invalid.”

Of course, there would be no next time, and no long career. Castillo died on April 19, 1962. He was 31 years old.

Moulin Jimmy's started out a utopia and ended up a graveyard. Did Castillo know it, then, that in just a few short years, the neighborhood—and by extension, Jimmy's—would never look the same? That his Hyde Park was little more than a glimmer, soon to succumb to the twin entropies of racism and classism? Looking at the artist's own worn, sharp-cheekboned visage surveying the scene like a hawk from the bottom-right corner, I feel as though he must have.

The Ahab at the bar was right. I started this whole thing looking for someone, and ended it looking for *somewhere*—somewhere that doesn't exist, strictly speaking. Funny thing about Hyde Parkers, though: We might sound disillusioned, but in reality, we're starry-eyed optimists, the whole lot. Have to be.

Finally, I answer him: “Yeah. I am.” And resolve to keep looking.

@2ndFiddle

viduals confined to the periphery of society by the studied mediocrity of their fellow man,” Castillo wrote in an apparent foreword to the novel. “It is a study of their Society, of the little Parises, the Greenwich Villages, the Cape Cobs, the Fisherman's Wharfs, the Lower Basin Streets, the Hyde Park bohemias into which the delta of the Great American Damned gravitate with inevitable and terrible cohesion.”

Cartooning may not have been Castillo's be-all end-all, but it was certainly most revealing of how he viewed the world. Plus, it paid the bills, at least for a time. Throughout his career, Castillo's biggest commissioner was *Doubt*, a magazine put out by the anti-government, anti-science Fortean Society, as well as a handful of sci-fi fanzines. The closest Castillo came to going corporate was painting window displays for department stores and illustration work for Mages Sporting Goods. Both gigs were, unsurprisingly, short-lived.

“While I knew him, I don't recall Art holding a nine-to-five,” Ottenheimer says. It simply wasn't his way.

If I were a more apologetic writer, I might call Castillo “complicated,” an adjective often

flung over egoists like a tablecloth. Judging by his correspondence, Castillo could be self-absorbed, even callous. His parents adored him, but he rarely reciprocated their warmth, and even then, usually only when he needed cash. (Unfortunately, his spotty finances meant he could rarely support his own child, to the point that he was once arrested for missed child support payments.)

For as sensitively as he assessed the inner lives of others, Castillo could be hot and cold with his romantic partners, too. You see this in *Moulin Jimmy's*: Often, Castillo knew which of his friends were about to leave one lover for another before their partners did, so he drew them positioned between their two love interests, turning their gaze from one to the other. He even depicted himself doing the same, sitting at a table with his dark-haired, kind-eyed wife but angling himself towards a long-lashed blonde.

But the panorama captures much more than petty interpersonal drama. It's a snapshot of Hyde Park as it once was—dense, bustling, and earnestly, uniquely polyglot. It was also a Hyde Park that wouldn't last. After the Supreme Court declared restrictive covenants unconstitutional in 1948, the Uni-

versity of Chicago flailed to halt the influx of lower-class Black Chicagoans into Hyde Park, first by a series of clearance projects under the aegis of the South East Chicago Commission, then with a federally backed urban renewal plan that won the backing of City Council in 1958. Whole blocks were razed and suburbanized; the streets became a maze of one-ways and dead ends.

Then, the collateral. Pre-urban renewal, dozens of taverns, clubs, and small businesses lined Hyde Park's arterial streets. By the end of the 1960s, only a select few survived. Gone was Compass Theater, the birthplace of improv comedy, once just a few doors down from Jimmy's. Gone, too, was the Beehive, the smoky jazz club where Charlie Parker performed one of his last gigs, seared off the map by a behemoth I.M. Pei housing complex that still bisects 55th Street. All in all, an estimated 4,000 families were displaced, most of whom were Black.

Planners maintained, truthfully, the resultant Hyde Park would be integrated, too—just on the university's terms. But to many cosmopolitan Hyde Parkers, urban renewal changed the neighborhood for the worse. A cynical motto trumpeted Hyde Park as the



The developed images from the disposable cameras will be on display in Logan Square Park.
COURTESY DEANNA J. SMITH

PUBLIC ART

See it Through Your Eyes

A new community photo project highlights the beauty of Logan Square as seen through new and old locals and will be on display at the centerfold of the neighborhood.

By **ARIEL PARRELLA-AURELI**

Growing up in Logan Square, 24-year-old photographer Deanna J. Smith has seen all the changes swirling around the neighborhood. But for her recent photo class at Columbia College that focuses on photography as a social practice, she wanted to see what the neighborhood looked like from other people's eyes, like newer residents, older folks, and diverse creatives. And in a time when the world wants us to be apart, bringing together the local community through a common and accessible thread felt extra important.

Her photo project, called *Through Your Eyes*, was born October 24 and acted like a social human experiment. She placed 12 disposable film cameras at the Logan Square monument park in a box with simple instructions: Grab a camera, take pictures of whatever you deem

beautiful or interesting in the neighborhood, and return them to the box by mid-November. While all the cameras were snatched up within a few days, the return was cut in half. At one point, the box disappeared. One person who took a camera had a spontaneous trip and accidentally took it with them. But Smith says that's part of the communal process and she had no expectations of participation. By the date of return, she ended up with six cameras filled with about 144 pictures able to be developed.

"It's all about the community and it's outside of yourself," Deanna says of what she's learning in her photo course. "You want to be very aware of what relationships you're working with, how you are making people feel."

Her goal for the project was to not only see views from another perspective and shine a

light on hidden gems in the area, but also create art accessibility for folks who might otherwise turn the other way. In giving people an easy tool, she hopes that documenting yielded juicy conversations about neighborhood representation and beauty. And for those who don't have social media or smartphones—or want to try and take a break from them—the film cameras are a respite from the daily buzz, a nostalgic throwback to simpler times.

That's part of why 35-year-old photographer and resident Bryan McVey decided to participate in *Through Your Eyes*. He remembers growing up using film cameras to document events like school dances and family activities. The photo project is a "nod to the nostalgia, which brings lighthearted and good feelings to people," McVey says.

Smith's project also caught his eye because it circled back to one of his own community photo works. In 2017, he started a crowdsourced disposable camera project with similar instructions at the festival Burning Man. That year he got one camera back. The next year, he tweaked the rules and got two cameras. The third year, he added an incentive for a higher camera return: a free, mailed deep-dish pizza. That

helped him get the most cameras back.

He hopes the *Through Your Eyes* project inspires people to get creative and that Smith keeps up the work to engage the community via documentation. "It's fun, artistic, and there's a low bar to entry," he says. "It's the kind of engagement we need. We are all looking for distractions, and point-and-shoot cameras are the easiest lens into somebody else's eyes."

Smith got the photos back Tuesday and says it was a successful first run. "The photos are all beautiful in different ways and really show the eye of the photographer and the essence of Logan Square."

She plans to unveil a public installation with the results December 8 in the centerfold of the neighborhood. Pandemic or not, the square is a place for residents to be outside and host DIY art installations. Even as it gets colder, there is always action there. That's why the photographer chose that location to set up the pictures, which will be double-sided laminated 8-by-11-inch prints hung on clotheslines between tree branches.

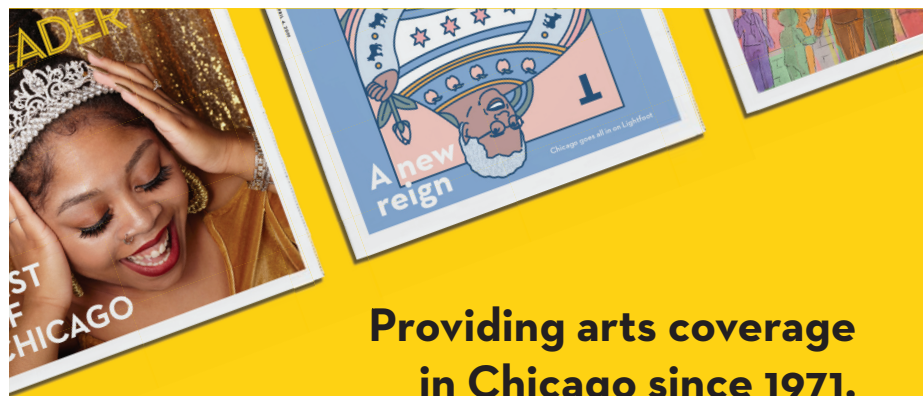
"This project is all about accessibility and I don't want anyone to feel like they are not welcome to come and look at the images and participate, whereas if you have an installation in a gallery, that's very gatekeeper-y for people," she says.

For Logan Square locals, or for those who only know the area for its scenic shots—think boulevards, murals, the monument, or the Logan Theatre marquee—Smith's project is a chance to see what else the neighborhood offers that you might not have seen before. I've called Logan Square home for about four years, and exploring it is still one of my favorite activities (even more so during the pandemic). Smith's favorite staple is the supermercado Brisa Foods at the corner of Kimball and Palmer.

"I think it's beautiful we have this coexistence of diversity in the neighborhood," she says. "We have our Logan Square staples that people love to photograph, but there are little things that if you are part of this community might mean more to you than others."

@ArielParrella

Through Your Eyes will be on display indefinitely, or until the wind and snow take over. For those who are uncomfortable with going to the park, Smith will also display the final prints on Instagram as a virtual art gallery.



Providing arts coverage
in Chicago since 1971.

READER
www.chicagoreader.com

A WORLD PREMIERE VIRTUAL FESTIVAL
CELEBRATING QUEERNESS + BLACKNESS

KICKBACK

A partnership with **REBUILD FOUNDATION** Conceived & Directed by **MIKAEL BURKE**



aft ABOUT FACE THEATRE

Streaming **DEC 12** thru **JAN 12** at
ABOUTFACETHEATRE.COM

Lead production sponsors Rebuild Foundation & IL Humanities

Is it a cold? Or COVID?

Either way, YOU
may have a **legal right** to take paid
sick time or paid
family leave.

Learn more:
bit.ly/c19rights



Women Employed

Have a Healthy Holiday Season

Manténgase saludable en estas fiestas



A flu shot and COVID-19 test is your first line of defense.

*Una vacuna contra la gripe y una prueba de
COVID-19 son sus formas principales de defensa.*

ACCESS COMMUNITY HEALTH NETWORK
TRANSFORMING COMMUNITY HEALTH CARE

Call / Llame al
1.866.267.2353



DANCE

Sugar plums at a distance

Ruth Page's *Nutcracker*, reimagined for a shutdown

By **IRENE HSIAO**

Every winter it comes: the tunes, the tinsel, the toys—and the tale of Clara, a young girl traveling to a kingdom of sweets with a magical Nutcracker prince. Chicago's oldest production of *The Nutcracker*, choreographed by Chicago ballet icon Ruth Page in 1965, has been a homegrown holiday tradition for decades. Initially choreographed for the 90-foot proscenium of

Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, National Ballet of Canada, English National Ballet, and Munich Bayerische Staatsoper to light up the stage in lead roles.

The proliferation of holiday shows on Chicago stages, including a competing *Nutcracker* by the Joffrey Ballet, gradually led to audience attrition and a decision by the organizers to cease the production at the Arie Crown in 1997, yet Page's choreography has been preserved to the present day through a stalwart lineage of dancers who have passed their roles to the next generations. Chief among these are Dolores Lipinski Long and Larry Long, both soloists in the original production, who cofounded the Ruth Page School of Dance and revived the production for the school's preprofessional training company, the Civic Ballet.

The production has been adapted over the years for changes in venue and scale, notably in 2002, when a partnership with the theater department at UIC resulted in

Visions: A Nutcracker Experience LA MAR BROWN

the incorporation of narration in Act I of the ballet, written by William F. Raffeld, UIC associate professor of theater, who played the role of the grandfather for 26 years at Arie Crown and continued his part with the Civic Ballet. This year, the challenge of the pandemic has pushed Page's *Nutcracker* to its most unusual revision yet: a truncated, immersive, socially distanced performance that takes place throughout the entire Ruth Page Center for the Arts, proof positive that this venerable *Nutcracker* is still alive and kicking after 55 years.

"We knew in July that we wouldn't be able to stage a traditional *Nutcracker*," says RPCA resource coordinator Katie Matteson Campana, who originated the idea for the new production, which contains additional choreography by Dolores Long and Birute Barodicaite and scenic design by Amanda Bradley. "The Ruth Page Center for the Arts has five floors of usable space: a theater, four studios, a conference room. The idea came to us to make it a walking, talking, site-specific *Nutcracker*. We wanted to make it magical and different but still that *Nutcracker* that our families and school are so familiar with."

With distancing regulations in mind, Matteson Campana began to explore how the building's layout charted a logical pathway for a pared-down story to unfold. The elegant lobby of the building could be decorated for the ballet's party scene. The studios could be individual stages for beloved scenes such as Snow. The library on the second floor, transformed into a workshop, inspired the character development of Drosselmeyer, Clara's mysterious uncle, who builds dolls and brings her the magical Nutcracker. And the Ruth Page stage could be reserved as the domain for the Sugar Plum Fairy.

"I was raised in the midwest, doing *Nutcracker* from the time I was knee-high to a grasshopper," she says. "I have done every role there is, including [performing] twice with the Civic Ballet. But I have also danced in modern companies and done site-specific work since 2006. This *Nutcracker* felt like a marriage of those things. I love story ballets—they are a gateway for so many people to get into dance—but I love the idea of getting to flip it on its head. Opening the production out of the theater makes it accessible to dance lovers who are not necessarily

classical ballet lovers."

Watching the production evolve in this context, "I felt like a little kid navigating through Clara's dream," says Ruth Page School of Dance director Victor Alexander, who plays the role of Drosselmeyer this year. "In a regular audience you'd be so far away, you wouldn't see the cannon by you, the mice by you. Now you're inside the world! You become part of that moment."

Alexander danced his first *Nutcracker* with the Civic Ballet in 2002 as a contemporary dancer and a new immigrant from Cuba, where the ballet had not yet become a holiday staple. "I'm not U.S.-born," he says. "It's incredible how everybody [here] is waiting for this time of year to see *The Nutcracker*, an event that brings joy to families, from little ones to oldest ones. In my dance career, I never knew that I would be dancing a *Nutcracker*. I never thought I would be directing a *Nutcracker*!"

When the stay-at-home advisory went into place on November 16, thwarting the plan for 33 socially-distanced performances to small audiences over three weekends, they opted to create a video for online streaming instead. "I had a conversation with the dancers," says Alexander. "This is a chance to bring something positive to the world. At this moment we are responsible for bringing Christmas to people's houses. Nobody else is doing *Nutcracker* in the city. This is the moment to bring joy and remind Chicago that our *Nutcracker* has been here since 1965, and we're still doing it."

"Next year is the school's 50th anniversary," says Matteson Campana. "Ruth Page was really innovative and did all kinds of crazy stuff. We have the opportunity to do that now too, to push forward with amazing Chicago roots. We can grow and develop and stay fresh and get even fresher."

"We still exist, and we're doing our best to keep the doors open and welcoming everybody," says Alexander. "We can keep that tradition, not just what it was, but what it is and what it will be. We want to keep moving forward."

With thanks to Laura Wade, dancer and soloist with the Ruth Page Nutcracker at Arie Crown for 18 years, longtime children's director at the Civic Ballet, and ballet teacher to many.

@IreneCHsiao



Jasmin Cardenas and her children, Catalina and Mateo **© JASMIN CARDENAS**

NEIGHBORHOOD TOURS

Take a hike

Chicago Children's Theatre's *Walkie Talkies* brings community lore to life.

By **CATEY SULLIVAN**

Aztec deities. Sistine Chapel replicas. Ancient mulberry trees. Ground Michelle Obama probably walked on. These are the elements that await within the latest adventures proffered by Chicago Children's Theatre. Let it be said that if the CDC were to visit CCT, they'd approve of the 15-year-old company's latest three productions. All are wholly outdoors and all will spur kids and their families to explore

worlds completely inaccessible via computer screens. They are also marvelously engaging, no matter your chronological age.

"Obviously necessity is the mother of invention," says CTC artistic director Jacqueline Russell of *Walkie Talkies*, three separate podcasts each meant to be heard while taking a 20-30 minute stroll through South Shore, La Villita, and Lincoln Park's North Pond Nature Sanctuary. Each free episode

comes with a map and a detailed audio play narrated by a storyteller (or tellers) taking the walk—virtually—with the participants.

"It seems like over time, people are getting less into online entertainment because kids are already spending so much school time online," Russell adds. "So we wanted to offer something that would get them moving, and get them excited about these neighborhoods. I'd really love to have one for each neighborhood. Lift them all up."

Eagle-eyes

Artist/activist Jasmin Cardenas brought her children (Mateo, 8 and Catalina, 5) into the storytelling as the trio explores *Butterflies*, *Aztec Gods* and *Puerquitos/Sweet Piggie Bread*, which she narrates with her children as they make their way through La Villita while playing a vivid game of I Spy.

"For me, it was an easy pick because it's such a beautiful, inspiring community that gets a bad rap because it gets a lot of bad publicity," she says. *Butterflies* is anchored in visual cues, including monarch butterflies, which migrate to Mexico by the millions every year, and the snake-bearing eagle central to the Mexican flag.

As the walk goes down 26th Street (Cardenas recommends going on a weekend, so you can—at a social distance—experience the street vendors) past shrines, murals, and cafes, the three narrators tell the stories behind local landmarks. These include tales that date back to the Aztec Empire and through changes the area has seen and is experiencing right now. At one point, they stop at a church that was started by Eastern Europeans and is now used by the Latinx community, an architectural monument to waves of immigrant communities.

"I knew I wanted to tell the story of the Mexican flag and the symbols in it—these images people see all the time but may not know the history of, even if they know all the insignias. I want them to hear about Our Lady of Guadalupe and the Aztecs," says Cardenas. "So I literally went to my kids and said, 'I'm going to tell you some stories and I need you to tell me what you think.' Because kids can have very short attention spans. And then I realized they could help me."

"We have to take an active ownership in our storytelling. That's important. I know these are sacred stories and I'm definitely a little nervous about people who might frown on some of the sillier elements we worked in. But the kids were on board."

The colors of water

Quenna Lené Barrett's *Stacey's Walk* is narrated by the titular 13-year-old girl (played by Jameela Muhammad) as she navigates from the lagoons of the Jackson Highlands past the Jeffery Theater and the South Shore Cultural Center to South Shore Beach. At her final stop, she recalls in immersive detail how her father taught her to find meditative comfort in the waters of Lake Michigan after the killing of Michael Brown.

"We so rarely invite young people to exercise control over their bodies in that way. It

artist, writer, performer?

CREATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR
CREATIVE PEOPLE

*Supportive, Affirming, and Goal-
Directed Psychotherapy and
Hypnotherapy for Adults*

MAX K. SHAPEY, LCSW

Located in Downtown Evanston

847-877-1940

www.maxshapey.com
maxshapey@aol.com

Blue Cross Blue Shield Preferred Provider
Cigna Preferred Provider

READER



Find **hundreds**
of **Reader-recommended**
restaurants at
chicagoreader.com/food.

THEATER

continued from 27

just felt like a nice way to begin and end it," Barrett says.

While she's walking, Stacey muses with often hilariously accurate teenage perspective on the sights and the neighborhood history she's been taught—or not taught. Upon seeing Jesse Jackson's old stomping grounds: "He was a Black man who ran for the presidency. Probably like a hundred years ago." And then: "That's pretty neat. They don't teach us in school about all the Black people that wanted to be president before Obama." It won't be the last time Barrett's writing pivots with ruthless grace from wry humor to blunt assessment of real-life ongoing travesties.

Barrett had parallel issues in learning about the neighborhood.

"It's a little difficult finding history of the area written by folk of color," she says. "I think I found one piece online eventually."

Stacey's walk is propelled by her desire to convince her mother that she's old enough to go to a protest. As she explains to the listener, she's researched the activist groups. She knows who the organizers are. She wants to stand up for what's right, as she's been taught. Why does her mother have to be so scared about it?

That's a question Barrett heard when she started attending protests and eventually organizing with both the Black Youth Project 100 and the #LetUsBreathe Collective.

"I think I started because I didn't know where to place the feelings I had been having. I had been angry over Trayvon. I was angry over Mike Brown. I didn't know where to put my anger, and I wanted to be with people who understood and wanted to do something about it. So I started following protests on Twitter. I'd look to see who and where people were. And at Black Youth Project 100 specifically, I finally found this group of young Black women and young queer folks who were not only leading protests, but also doing educational work on how we could actually get to a different place."

In *Stacey's Walk*, she delves into history much older than Jesse Jackson. We hear about the impact of redlining and lunch counter protests, and about legendary artists with local roots such as Ramsey Lewis. (Stacey's hot take on jazz is quite memorable.)

"I think I'm in this moment where I'm less afraid of saying out loud things I might have kept in several years ago," Barrett says. "We have to invest in Black spaces and Black peo-

ple. We have to know the history; we have to think of the future."

To the birds

Husband-and-wife northsiders Shawn Pfautsch and Jessica Ridenour did not, strictly speaking, create a neighborhood walk. *The Green Heron—or—Should I Be Scared?* is instead a perambulation around Lincoln Park's North Pond Nature Sanctuary, as directed by a mother-and-son pair of green herons.

The son heron has the bright idea to migrate to the ocean via foot instead of flight, because, he explains, flying is too hard. The mother heron agrees to let him walk, provided he can find someone to accompany him. So begins an odyssey involving surfer-dude squirrels, mama muskrats worthy of Beatrix Potter, and the occasional moment of predatory realism as junior begins his great walk-about. Pfautsch and Ridenour play the entire menagerie.

Through it all, Pfautsch wanted to emphasize the little heron's recurring question about fear as he and his mother encounter myriad creatures great and small.

"We want to honor children's feelings. I think kids are very sensitive, in a good way, about death and fear and being scared. I think when you're working on a story, it should be in context of what you're feeling in the world, what's happening. And we see a lot of fear right now, for obvious reasons. So we started to think—how can we put the question of 'Should I be scared?' into context for kids?"

"There are things the mother says about different situations. Don't be scared, be wary. Trust your instincts, but also look at the information you're being given," Ridenour adds.

Pfautsch has been an avid birder for decades, a choice that prompted his heron characters. The graceful birds "skulk around the pond," and although they can be hard to spot, "there's absolutely a chance you'll see them on the walk," Pfautsch says. But the point isn't bird-watching so much as storytelling, and *Should I Be Scared?* finds plenty of non-avian flora and fauna to celebrate.

"The most important thing for me is for the audience to have a good time," says Pfautsch. "I want them to connect with these plants and places, but mostly I want them to enjoy themselves. All of Shakespeare's plays have clowns. Even the tragedies." 

 @CateySullivan

Don't miss an issue

Get the Next 12 Issues of the **Chicago Reader**
Delivered to Your Home

chicagoreader.com/support

THEATRE IN THE DARK



A Christmas Carol ...In the Dark

direct from our sound studios
to your living room speakers
12/10 – 12/24

a live online audio play
tickets & information at
theatreinthedark.com





CANNABIS CONVERSATIONS

An exploration of cannabis and hemp topics from multiple perspectives:
medical, historical, social equity, ecological and more.

Featuring:

- **So Fresh and So Clean: Aeroponic Cannabis** ◦—
- **Know Where Your CBD Comes From** ◦—
- **No More Mystery Cannabis** ◦—
- **How to Read a Cannabis Label** ◦—
- **Managing Fibromyalgia Symptoms with Cannabis** ◦—
- **Demystifying Edibles** ◦—
- **The Future of Retail** ◦—
- **Know Your Rights** ◦—

Sponsored by:

RISE, Nature's Care Co., Dr. Mauricio Consalter, Aeriz, Tulip
Tree Gardens, Consume Cannabis Co., and Greenhouse



Illinois Women in Cannabis exists to support and advance women in the thriving cannabis industry.

Join our Monthly Networking Sessions, which focus entirely on building community and providing connections to help you break into the industry.

www.ilwomenincannabis.org



The ultimate experience in cannabis culinary exploration from the comfort of your home.



NEW SCENERY
FRESH GREENERY

YOUR HOME FOR REC CANNABIS IN SKOKIE
15% OFF YOUR FIRST THREE VISITS



greenhouse

aeriz

So fresh & so clean.

REACHING NEW HEIGHTS WITH AEROPONIC CANNABIS

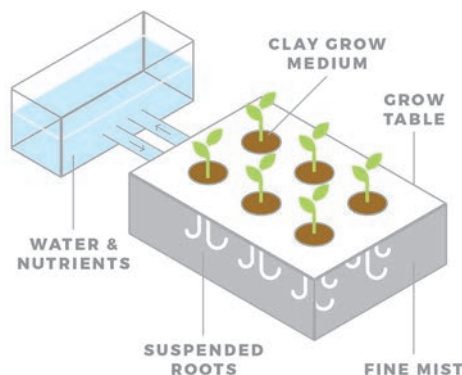
Astrophysicist Carl Sagan once speculated that cannabis might be the first crop ever cultivated by human hands, leading to the invention of agriculture- which, in turn, led to the development of civilization itself. While it's impossible to know definitively if cannabis was the very first cultivated plant, we do know it was among the first, with records of human use of the plant reaching back over 10,000 years. For millennia, cannabis and agriculture have been inextricably linked, with innovation and human ingenuity continually working towards a better way to grow.

You've likely heard of cannabis grown hydroponically, a method involving growing plants in a solution of water and nutrients rather than soil. The earliest record we have of hydroponics dates back to Francis Bacon's 1627 book *Sylva Sylvarum*. However, it would take several centuries more before the next innovation in cannabis cultivation would surface- aeroponic growing.

In the early twentieth century, ideas began to crop up about plants growing in nothing but air, with nutrients being misted directly onto the root system. The term "aeroponics" was coined to describe this process in 1957. However, the final piece of the aeroponic puzzle wouldn't be developed until 1983 by a man named- and I promise I'm not making this up- Richard Stoner.

Stoner's innovation was patenting a microprocessor interface that delivered water and nutrients to plants in precise amounts. He continued to refine the process for years, while marketing the first aeroponically grown food in supermarkets and helping NASA build systems to grow plants in space.

While growing cannabis has become more accessible in recent years, it's still far from easy- and like anything, it's a challenge to truly excel. Aeroponic growing offers numerous advantages over other types of cultivation, providing reliability that's otherwise difficult to achieve. The most obvious of these benefits is consistency- misting roots with the precise amounts of water and nutrients that plants need to thrive allows growers to produce the most robust and healthy plants possible. When a cannabis consumer finds a product that they really love, or even depend on, buying aeroponic means they can count on getting exactly what they want each time they go to the dispensary.



Free from the constraints of soil and other sources of contamination, aeroponic flower is terpene-rich and intoxicating in flavor and aroma. The lack of residual nutrients results in flower that is essentially 100% pure. The experience of opening a fresh jar and savoring the complex bouquet of scents that unfold from within is universal to cannabis enthusiasts, and aeroponic cannabis delivers that experience with an unforgettable brightness and intensity.



By Zack Bigg, head grower at Aeriz Illinois
With Ian Krass

**“we’ll have saved an
estimated 2.15 million
pounds of soil by 2025”**

Another enormous benefit of aeroponic growing is its extremely low environmental footprint. While a traditional cannabis grow can go through thousands of pounds of soil and countless gallons of water, aeroponic cultivation uses no soil and far less water than any other method. At Aeriz, we'll have saved an estimated 2.15 million pounds of soil by 2025- and we go even further by recycling our water and nutrients in a closed-loop system.



From the very beginning, we at Aeriz decided to grow exclusively aeroponic cannabis. At the core of our mission is a belief that consumers shouldn't have to compromise when it comes to the quality, purity, and consistency of their cannabis. Aeroponics is the best, and indeed only, way to achieve that mission. We're the only cultivator in Illinois that grows aeroponically, and we believe that the resulting cannabis speaks for itself.

@AERIZUSA

AERIZ.COM



RACHAEL AND JESSE SMEDBERG, COURTESY TULIP TREE GARDENS

Know where your CBD comes from

SPONSORED BY TULIP TREE GARDENS

CBD products are popping up everywhere, from street corner shops to grocery stores and fashion boutiques. However, it's anyone's guess as to the source of the actual CBD in many of these products.

Tulip Tree Gardens was started in 2015 by Rachael Smedberg and her husband, Jesse. They make high-quality, lab-tested CBD products from hemp that they grow on their 63-acre farm just south of Chicago and process on-site. Using regenerative agriculture and sustainable practices, Tulip Tree Gardens produces a true seed-to-bottle product with an emphasis on quality.

CBD (a non-psychoactive component of the cannabis plant) has gained recognition for its potential to help ease pain, regulate inflammation, alleviate stress and anxiety, impact sleep quality, aid digestion and support immunity. But much of the CBD on the market lacks clarity on its source, quality and dosing.

"So many CBD products are made with industrially produced CBD oil sold on the bulk market," says Rachael Smedberg. "We believe people want more transparency about the products they are buying so they can feel confident in the quality."

How to Recognize and Use High-Quality CBD

When the Smedbergs started Tulip Tree Gardens, they were driven by a desire to heal the earth, their community

and people far and wide who would buy their products. "The deeper we got into researching the right ways to grow hemp and make CBD products, the more passionate we got about educating people about CBD and helping them understand how to use it," adds Smedberg.

Tulip Tree Gardens stands out from other CBD brands in five ways:

1. All products are made from hemp that is farmed regeneratively without any pesticides or herbicides.
2. Every product is traceable to its exact hemp origin and includes a QR code with product details and usage tips.
3. Every batch is lab-tested to guarantee safety and purity.
4. Tulip Tree CBD products are properly dosed.
5. As a seed-to-bottle producer, Tulip Tree is able to price its products very reasonably.

As an example of the price differentiation, Tulip Tree Gardens 1000 mg oil sells for \$55. Many other brands are \$100 or more, purely because consumers will pay that much. As a seed-to-bottle producer, Jesse Smedberg says, "We don't think people should have to go broke to feel well."

Regenerative Farming Benefits the Planet and People

Unlike organic farming, which requires expensive certifications and is a "one-way" practice, where nothing is returned

to the earth, regenerative farming takes from and gives back to the earth, helping preserve critical topsoil and improve soil health.

By not tilling, carbon stays in the soil, instead of spreading into the atmosphere, exacerbating the greenhouse gas issue. Planting diverse cover crops like hay, barley and rye feeds the soil with nutrients to keep it thriving. The key to regenerative farming is building vibrant and sustainable biomes within the farm and soil.

From premium CBD oils to topical creams to smokable hemp flower, Tulip Tree Gardens sells products made exclusively from regeneratively farmed seed-to-bottle hemp. Tulip Tree Gardens even has an on-site market open daily selling farm-fresh produce.

The Dosing Difference

In order to access the potential benefits of CBD, an average adult requires at least .5 ml per day of 1000 mg concentration oil. Brands at the 250 mg or 350 mg concentration require a higher dosage, ultimately costing the consumer more.

Tulip Tree Gardens CBD oils are properly dosed, so customers get a high-quality product that delivers excellent value, and Rachael Smedberg provides personal guidance to customers to help them get the best result from their CBD products.

Tulip Tree Gardens is located at 1236 E. Eagle Lake Road in Beecher, IL and its complete range of products is available

online at www.tuliptreegardensco.com. Follow Tulip Tree Gardens on Instagram @tuliptreegardens and Facebook @tuliptreegardens.



Demystifying edibles

Sponsored content by RISE Dispensaries, a subsidiary of Green Thumb Industries

If you followed the most recent election cycle, you may have noticed one clear winner emerge—cannabis. This election cycle, voters in Arizona, Montana, New Jersey, and South Dakota said Y-E-S to T-H-C, showing that support for legal cannabis crosses demographic and geographic lines.

Though attitudes toward cannabis continue to move toward mainstream acceptance, consumer education continues to lag. A June 2020 survey conducted by Oasis Intelligence showed that despite their support in cannabis legalization, many legal consumers still need help understanding basic cannabis concepts. This sentiment is not shocking, as cannabis is a unique category that brings a relatively new shopping experience to the masses. What's more, outdated stoner stereotypes have historically overshadowed the therapeutic and medicinal benefits that millions are able to enjoy because of legal cannabis, leaving behind a population of adults who may be interested in trying cannabis but have no idea where to begin.

If you are one of the millions of adults living with such canna-curiosity, edible cannabis might be a good place to start, as it allows for discrete consumption and does not require inhalation, a common barrier to entry for those with an aversion to smoking formats such as pre-rolled joints or loose flower. If you want to get smarter about edible cannabis, here is what you will want to know before walking into a dispensary.

The Basics

When it comes to cannabis, method of consumption plays a key role in defining the experience. Before we dive into some of these differences, it is worth getting acquainted with some of the basic chemistry behind the cannabis plant.

Cannabis contains organic compounds called cannabinoids and terpenes. When consumed, cannabinoids like THC bind to receptors throughout the body to trigger the plant's therapeutic effects. This network of receptors exists within the body's endocannabinoid system, the system that helps regulate and balance body processes such as communication between cells, immune responses, metabolism, and more. While there are more than 80 cannabinoids in existence, THC and CBD are two of the most prominent cannabinoids found in the cannabis plant. THC is generally known for its psychoactive properties or feelings of euphoria associated with "getting high." In contrast, CBD is not psychoactive and has been used to manage a variety of ailments ranging from anxiety to chronic pain and inflammation.

Terpenes, on the other hand, are compounds primarily responsible for the aroma and taste of the cannabis plant. But terpenes are not exclusively found in cannabis. They can also be found in other plants and foods like mangos, which contain high levels of Myrcene, a terpene known for its earthy aroma.

Inhalation v. Ingestion

When consumed through inhalation, cannabinoids and terpenes enter the bloodstream through the lungs. When inhaled, these compounds are said to work synergistically to unlock the nuanced effects of different cannabis strains, a theory known as "the entourage effect." In contrast, edibles must make their way through the digestive system, resulting in a more delayed onset than smoking. As THC gets metabolized by the liver, it is converted into a more potent compound known as 11-hydroxy-THC. As a result, edibles have been known to deliver a more intense and longer lasting experience relative to smoking.

Indica or Sativa? It Doesn't Really Matter.

Ever hear the unwritten rule of thumb asserting that sativa strains are more energizing, while indica strains tend to be more relaxing? If so, here's some news that will rock your world. When it comes to edibles, indica and sativa classifications are generally a misnomer. That is not to say that you will not come across edibles brands that tout these classifications on the shelf. It simply means that consumers often shop based on the effects they are seeking, and brands that use these classifications remain in consideration because consumers are unfamiliar with the science behind edibles.

Most edibles are made with pure THC oil commonly known as "distillate." It is extracted from the plant through a process known as distillation that ultimately strips the oil of terpenes to yield more concentrated THC oil. Distillate lacks taste and aroma, making it easier to manufacture edibles that are both tasty and efficacious. While it is possible to add terpenes back to distillate once extracted, there is no definitive research that shows that terpenes can be absorbed through the body's digestive tract.

This does not mean that all edibles products are the same. In fact, some brands are exploring alternative methods of production to develop edibles that better deliver on specific effects. For example, incredibles, a national edibles brand headquartered in Chicago, recently launched "Snoozzeberry," a blueberry flavored gummy that combines THC with



You snoozze you win.

Announcing our ALL NEW blueberry flavored cannabis-infused gummies, made with THC and CBN, a cannabinoid combo known for its potential sedative and sleep inducing effects.

Now available at **RISE**

While supplies last. Keep out of reach of children. For use only by adults 21 years of age and older.

CBN, a non-psychoactive cannabinoid known for its sedative properties and potential sleep-inducing effects.

Tips for Safe Consumption

We have all heard the horror stories about that friend of a friend who tried edibles for the first time, only to end up in the fetal position next to a half-eaten bag of chips. If you are considering edibles for the first time, here are a few pointers to help you avoid such a nightmare.

1. Start low: Everyone's metabolism and body composition are unique. As a result, it may take a few attempts to find the dose that is right for you. Remember

to start with a low dose between 1mg and 5mg and gradually work your way up until you find your ideal dose.

2. Go Slow: Edibles can take anywhere between 1-4 hours to take effect. Do not be tempted to eat more just because you cannot feel the effects right away as you could overdo it.

3. You overdid it, now what? Find a safe and quiet place to relax, preferably with a trusted person by your side. Drink plenty of water and try focusing on breathing and remaining calm. Time is one of the best solutions for getting through a bad edibles experience.

No More Mystery Cannabis



TESTING HELPS ENSURE QUALITY AND SAFETY

By Elizabeth Ardillo, PharmD
Lead Pharmacist at Rise Dispensaries

If you're putting something in or on your body—food, medicine, cosmetics—you probably want to know what's in it. Why not hold your cannabis to the same standard?

Thanks to testing, you can be confident your cannabis contains the ingredients that tend to provide a specific effect. Whether you're looking for a pleasant high or for strategies to reduce pain or improve sleep, test results can point you in the right direction.

Even more importantly, testing tells you that your cannabis isn't laden with stuff you definitely don't want in there, such as pesticides and other chemicals.

Marijuana purchased on the black market, meaning not from a legal and licensed dispensary, is unpredictable. You don't know what soil was used to grow it, what it might have been sprayed with or what could be mixed into it. You may have had an experience with marijuana that either made you feel really bad or nothing at all—who knows what was in there?

At Rise, we can provide detailed information about the content of our hundreds of cannabis products because each product undergoes rigorous testing. Here's how it works:

- Cannabis is grown in cultivation centers, where it is processed and turned into products for sale, including flower, edibles, concentrates, vape cartridges, tinctures and more.
- Each batch of cannabis is tested by an independent, licensed testing lab approved by the Illinois Department of Agriculture. The lab worker selects a random sample from each batch for testing.
- The sample undergoes an ingredient analysis to determine its makeup of cannabinoids (THC and CBD) and terpenes, responsible for how cannabis makes you feel.
- The sample is checked for substances, microorganisms and compounds that can cause adverse health effects. Testing looks for pesticides, mycotoxins (toxins made by fungus), solvent residue (left over from processing) and microbiological contaminants (bacteria and mold are two examples).

Products that don't pass testing don't make it to our shelves, so they won't end up in your hands. Thanks to testing, you can be sure you're getting the good stuff—and nothing more.



You know what will make us all **smile?**

THE RETURN OF
MAGNIFICENCE TO OUR MILE

You know what keeps us **going?**

YOUR CULTURES,
YOUR SCULPTURES,
RHYTHM AND FLOWING

You know how we create an
incredible **scene?**

REFLECT ON THE BEAN,
CULINARY CUISINE

You know what we truly **enjoy?**

SAFELY SERVING
ALL OF ILLINOIS

You know why we will grow **together?**

WINDS OF CHANGE,
CHICAGO WEATHER

You know our goal in **2021?**

PROVIDE ACCESS TO
CANNABIS FOR EVERYONE

RISE

risecannabis.com

How to Read a Cannabis Label

FIND THE PRODUCT THAT'S RIGHT FOR YOU

By Elizabeth Ardillo, PharmD
Lead Pharmacist at Rise Dispensaries

If cannabis product labels look overwhelming to you, don't stress: At Rise Dispensaries, there are cannabis consultants ready to help you find the right product—no prior knowledge required.

Of course, as with any other product you consume, it can be helpful to understand the label. Here are some basics.

- **Product name:** This one's straightforward: If you try the Barry Lemonade bud or the Incredibles™ Windy City chocolate bar and love it, you can ask for it by name next time.

- **Product ingredients:** Some products, including edibles and tinctures, have ingredients other than cannabis in them, such as oils, flavoring or sugar. If you have any allergies or sensitivities, be sure to check.

- **Weight:** This tells you the mass or concentration of the product. Over time, this will be helpful information to figure out which dose works best for you. As always, a cannabis consultant can help.

- **Cultivator:** This is the name of the company that grew and processed the cannabis.

- **Cannabinoid content:** Cannabinoids are compounds in cannabis that interact with our endocannabinoid system to cause various effects.
 - THC is what makes you feel high, and it may help improve sleep and reduce pain, nausea and vomiting. If you're new to cannabis, you'll want to start with a very low dose of THC and slowly, gradually increase to the desired effect.
 - CBD won't cause a high, but it may help to offset the psychoactive effects of THC.

- **Terpenes:** Terpenes are the organic compounds that give many foods and plants, including cannabis, their smell and flavor. They are the best way to dial in on what works for you because they're the ingredient that most correlates with effect.

- **Harvest date, test date, packaging date and use by date:** Cannabis is most effective and enjoyable within a year of production.

- **Batch number:** Batch numbers help dispensaries keep track of which products were made at the same time.

- **Testing company:** This is the name of the licensed, independent testing lab that checked the cannabis for harmful materials and confirmed the active ingredients.

One last tip: Keep a cannabis journal to record products you consume, including the dose, terpenes and THC/CBD makeup. This information will help you and your cannabis consultant make more informed decisions each time you shop.

We're Here to Help
Let's talk about THC, CBD, terpenes and what's right for you. Visit risecannabis.com/dispensaries to find a dispensary and how to get in touch with us.





clearing
cannabis
convictions

NewLeafIllinois.org

A PROJECT OF ILLINOIS EQUAL JUSTICE FOUNDATION



Save the Paper, Make it Vapor
onsenlabs.com

CANNABIS EQUITY IL

We are a grassroots non-profit formed by community members fighting to ensure that the legalization of cannabis in Illinois prioritizes the needed repair and reinvestment in the communities most impacted by the War on Drugs, and to ensure the cannabis industry prioritizes people over profits.

CannabisEquityIL@gmail.com | cannabisequityil.org



We are a community of medical cannabis patients helping other patients. We help with recipes, instruction, discounts on needed equipment, facilitating private patient learning events and providing a safe place for patients and caregivers to share and learn.

 /MedicalKannabisDIY  /medicalcannabisDIY/



CANNABIS BUSINESS ASSOCIATION OF ILLINOIS

OFFERING FREE MEMBERSHIP TO MINORITY-OWNED CANNABIS BUSINESSES

The Cannabis Business Association of Illinois (CBAI) is proud to offer minority-owned businesses FREE membership into the Association.

The CBAI provides access to the largest network of Illinois cannabis businesses and a host of additional member benefits.

To sign up for CBAI membership and to learn more about the free Minority Business Associate Membership, visit **cbail.org/MBAM** or email **info@cbail.org**

CBAI membership unlocks key benefits:

- ✓ Gain access to and insights from hundreds of cannabis businesses
- ✓ Participation in member-led committees that are driving the future of the industry, including the Minority Access Committee
- ✓ Speaking opportunities at trade shows and webinars
- ✓ Networking events with business leaders across the country



Attorney representing all persons, businesses and interests in the medical and adult use marijuana industry and persons and businesses involved in the industrial hemp industry, in Illinois, nationally and internationally.

Hoban Law Group | Larry Mishkin, Esq.
500 Skokie Blvd., Ste. 325, Northbrook, IL 60062
847-504-1480 | www.hoban.law

Fibromyalgia and cannabis

Sponsored content by NeuroMedici

Fibromyalgia is one of the most prevalent chronic pain conditions in the world. According to the CDC, fibromyalgia affects four million adults in the United States, about two percent of the population. Living with fibromyalgia can be frustrating and have an effect on your overall quality of life. The most common symptoms we see in the patients we treat include prolonged chronic pain, extreme fatigue, difficulty sleeping, and problems with cognition and memory (often referred to as “fibro fog”).

Risk factors for developing fibromyalgia as outlined by the CDC include: age (people are likely to be diagnosed with it as they approach middle age), a diagnosis of rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, PTSD, repetitive injury, gender (women are more likely to be diagnosed with fibromyalgia than men), body weight, and a family history of fibromyalgia.

Current mainstream treatment options for fibromyalgia are slim and usually include a combination of antidepressants, muscle relaxers, and sleep aids. Success with these medications varies patient to patient and could potentially increase the risk for opioid addiction.

Seeking pain relief and a better quality of life, fibromyalgia patients have been turning to medical cannabis to help alleviate their symptoms. One of the top reasons our patients apply for their medical cannabis card is to treat chronic pain. The cannabinoid THC binds to pain receptors in the brain, making the pain more tolerable for patients. Many patients report feeling relief just after one day of using medicated products that contain THC. THC products range beyond traditional flower to smoke—edibles, tinctures, topical lotions and transdermal patches, and more. If you are looking to use cannabis products that don’t cause a “high” effect, you have options such as CBD oil, topical lotions, and transdermal patches. Finding the right product for you can be simple by consulting your budtender at your chosen medical dispensary. If you have been trying to find relief for your fibromyalgia, medical cannabis may be right for you. Visit www.drconsalter.com to schedule your free consultation with Dr. Consalter.

FIBROMYALGIA FACTS

SYMPTOMS:

- CHRONIC PAIN
- EXTREME FATIGUE
- DIFFICULTY SLEEPING
- COGNITION/MEMORY PROBLEMS (“FIBRO-FOG”)

RISK FACTORS:

- AGE
- RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS
- LUPUS
- PTSD
- REPETITIVE INJURY
- GENDER
- BODY WEIGHT
- FAMILY HISTORY

TREATMENTS:

- ANTIDEPRESSANTS
- MUSCLE RELAXERS
- SLEEP AIDS
- CANNABIS

“Many patients report feeling relief just after one day of using medicated products that contain THC.”

THINKING ABOUT A MEDICAL CANNABIS CARD?



**VOTED #1 CLINIC TO
GET YOUR MEDICAL
CARD IN ILLINOIS**

Chronic Pain | Migraines | Insomnia | Fibromyalgia

Dr. Mauricio Consalter | (773) 227-2687

WWW.DRCONSALTER.COM



HEAL YOUR MIND

KETAMINE INFUSION THERAPY

TREATMENT-RESISTANT DEPRESSION | SEVERE
ANXIETY | CHRONIC PAIN | PTSD | FIBROMYALGIA



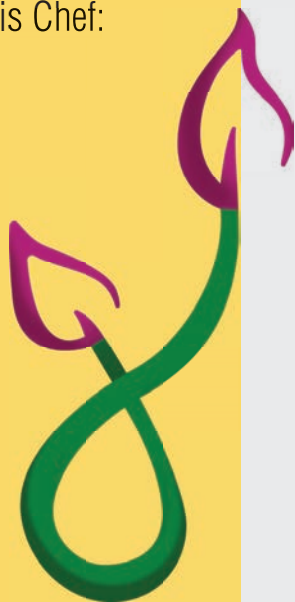
NeuroMedici
by Dr. Consalter

WWW.NEUROMEDICI.COM | LOGAN SQUARE

From Chicago's Plant Based Cannabis Chef:

VIRTUAL INFUSION LESSONS

Learn to make edibles
from the comfort of
your own home.



BOBBI'S BAKED

· A L I M E N T S ·

Visit www.bobbisbaked.com to learn more

21+



The *Reader 420 Companion* is
filled with great recipes, activities
and coloring pages.

Details may be found at
chicagoreader.com/420book



CANNABIS CONVERSATIONS

An exploration of cannabis and hemp
topics from multiple perspectives:
medical, historical, social equity,
ecological and more.

We're continuing the conversation!

Watch for the next Reader
Cannabis Conversations on
February 18, 2021

Space is limited. Reserve your spot now.

For more information, contact
ads@chicagoreader.com

THE FUTURE OF RETAIL

ART + EDUCATION + TECHNOLOGY

ART

Dispensaries like Consume Oakbrook Terrace create an engaging and unique experience through art, education, and technology. The visual attractions begin as you enter the dispensary with a 96-inch display featuring custom animations by world renowned artists from Limelight Projection Mapping. Consume is sleek and modern with playful elements. It features a mural painted by Chicago artist JC Rivera that showcases the "World's



Largest Joint." Purchasers can take a bit of the visual appeal home by purchasing a handcrafted, American-made glass pipe. The glass pipes are as functional as they are beautiful.

CONSUME
OAKBROOK TERRACE

EDUCATION

Dispensaries need to offer something for both new customers and experienced cannabis enthusiasts. For beginners, a dispensary needs a knowledgeable staff to inform and assist throughout the sale. This includes helping a customer understand



onset, effects, and proper dosing of the products they are purchasing. Consume Oakbrook Terrace has taken that to another level with interactive displays to explain the world of cannabis. Some dispensaries also offer educational classes that cover topics like Cannabis 101 and Cooking with Cannabis. Due to the pandemic, many of these classes are now online.



TECHNOLOGY



Consume Oakbrook Terrace combines education and art in its innovative touchscreen technology to guide purchasers.



The interactive exhibit explains cannabis from seed to sale. This includes the different methods of consumption, the effects of cannabis and the active compounds. One of the most unique parts of the display dispenses the scents of terpenes and different strains. This allows cannabis users to make an informed purchase. The combination of art, technology and education is the future of retail.

SPONSORED CONTENT BY NATURE'S CARE WEST LOOP

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS



ILLINOIS CANNABIS EQUITY AND SAFE ACCESS FOR ALL

CANNABIS LAWS 101: THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT CANNABIS IN ILLINOIS



- 21 + (with an ID) to purchase cannabis from a state licensed dispensary
- Adult Use customers can legally purchase and possess: 30 grams of cannabis, 5 grams of concentrate, cannabis-infused products containing less than 500mg of THC



- Non-residents of Illinois can purchase or possess half of that amount
- Registered medical patients can grow up to five plants
- Keep your cannabis locked up air tight and out of reach during transport

CANNABIS IS A PRIVILEGE SO IT COMES WITH RESPONSIBILITY



- It's illegal to leave Illinois with cannabis products - medical or non-medical. Mailing cannabis from Illinois is also illegal, even if purchased legally.
- Consuming cannabis in any form - whether it be smoking, eating, vaping or other - isn't permitted in public places. Consuming cannabis is legal within the confines of private property, if allowed by the property owners.
- Only Medical Marijuana Card Holders are permitted to grow cannabis in their homes in the state of Illinois.
- Check with your employer on company policies. Even if it is legal in the state, companies designate their own set of drug and alcohol policies.
- Consume responsibly and don't drive under the influence of cannabis.

NEED HELP? STILL HAVE QUESTIONS? SEE A FEW RESOURCES BELOW

EDUCATION + CAREER PATHWAYS

Through educational sessions, *Nature's Care & ColaGroup* provide professional development and access to information on certifications and trainings needed for a successful career in the cannabis industry. naturescarecompany.com/social-equity



EXPUNGEMENT ROADMAP

The roadmap provides knowledge, educational information, access to legal services and pathways to assist individuals who need to navigate the state of Illinois cannabis related expungement process. www.colagroupllc.com

NATURE'S CARE WEST LOOP - NOW OPEN

810 W. RANDOLPH ST, CHICAGO, IL 60607

WEBSITE: [NATURESCARECOMPANY.COM](https://naturescarecompany.com) SOCIAL: @NCCWESTLOOP

CANNABIS EQUITY PARTNERSHIP WITH COLAGROUP, LLC. & CANNABIS EQUITY ILLINOIS COALITION

Source: ACLU of Illinois : Cannabis Equity Illinois Coalition : ColaGroup, LLC DISCLAIMER: The information provided herein is for general informational purposes only and not for the purpose of providing legal advice. You should contact your attorney to obtain advice with respect to any particular legal matter. Age 21+Only

FINDING YINGYING ★★★★★

Dir. Jiayan "Jenny" Shi, 98 min.

Gene Siskel Film Center From Your Sofa, siskelfilmcenter.org/filmcenterfromyoursofa**FILM****REVIEW**

Finding Yingying looks at the human impact of a tragic crime

Jiayan "Jenny" Shi's doc honors Yingying Zhang as a person, not a victim.

By **JOSH FLANDERS**

On June 9, 2017, Yingying Zhang, a 26-year-old visiting Chinese scholar at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign, disappeared. The story of her family's search for her, and their fight for justice in what tragically became a case of abduction and murder, made international news.

The documentary *Finding Yingying* paints an intimate portrait of Yingying through personal diary entries and interviews with family, friends, and colleagues. The film is masterfully directed, shot, and produced by Jiayan "Jenny" Shi, her debut with Kartemquin Films. Shi, who went to the same school in China as Yingying, albeit at different times, accomplishes two nearly impossible

tasks. She covers this story as it unfolds—including the family's journey to America from a tiny Chinese village for the first time, their frantic search for Yingying, and undying hope of finding her—and documents the family's fight to make sure justice was served. And she does this all while poignantly conveying Yingying's compassionate nature, her deep appreciation for life, and her ambitions to one day become a teacher.

Shi's film honors Yingying as a person and not just a victim, celebrating her accomplishments and dreams, without allowing her death to overshadow her life. Shi explores her humble beginnings, from a family that took out loans to send her to an American university hoping for a better life, to her

ambivalence about coming to a new country. Yingying's diaries, written in her first six weeks in the country before her disappearance, chronicle feelings of being alone, her faith in others, fears, and eternal hope.

Shi's ability to act as both director and translator for Yingying's family, many of whom do not speak English, provide her with unfettered access. Yingying's fiancé, Ziaolin, accompanies the family to America, acting as their spokesman in English, speaking powerfully and eloquently to the public. In one heart-wrenching scene he sings one of her favorite songs while playing guitar at a public memorial on campus.

The University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign has the largest population of Chinese students in the U.S. It remains to be seen what long-term impact this might have on enrollment, but the film shows Chinese students on campus taking more precautions and curtailing their activities. It leaves one to ask what proactive steps the university takes to acclimate this population to the cultural differences they inevitably encounter.

Finding Yingying does not over-sensationalize the true crime elements, but instead stays with the very human impact this crime has on those who knew Yingying: her classmates, friends, and family. Her influence on others, even friends on campus who knew

Finding Yingying

her only a few weeks, is apparent. She had a tremendously warm soul and touched everyone she met.

Shi follows the family back to their small village in China, a year after her disappearance. Shi deftly captures, with tenderness and honesty, Yingying's father's feelings of guilt, the painful lies and rumors the family endures at the hands of neighbors and relatives, her brother's suffering seeing his parents torn apart by anger and sadness, and the burden he carries trying to match the ambitions of his sister.

With a wealth of archival footage, *Finding Yingying* also explores the details of the investigation, search, and subsequent trial of the man accused in Yingying's abduction and murder. It sheds light on what role, if any, the University of Illinois played in failing to prevent this tragedy. (In June of 2020, a judge tossed out the second lawsuit brought on behalf of Yingying against two university social workers who were accused of failing to intervene when the murderer expressed homicidal ideations, an especially chilling scene caught on video.)

With *Finding Yingying*, Shi brilliantly weaves together a tragic crime story with a sensitive, authentic family drama, peppering it with transcendent moments of hope and heroism. One unlikely character intimately connected to the murderer becomes an integral part in working with the authorities. A highlight of the film comes when this person finally meets with Yingying's family.

The most impactful narrative of the film is voiced by the director reading passages from Yingying's private journal. In her own words, she shares her dreams of wanting to take care of her family, to make enough money to support them, and to just be happy. With poetic turns of phrase, she expresses her love for her fiancé, her love of travel, and that she longs to measure the earth with her feet.

Finding Yingying is nothing short of extraordinary and will leave a lasting impact on everyone fortunate enough to see it. Yingying's enduring ability to inspire can be summed up in a line from her journal: "Life is too short to be ordinary." 

 @joshua_flanders

★★★★★ EXCELLENT ★★★★★ GOOD ★★★★★ AVERAGE ★★★★★ POOR ● WORTHLESS



ESSAY

The warm embrace of a rom-com

How Chicago-based love stories provide comfort in the middle of a pandemic

By KAYLEN RALPH

After stripping off my blazer and picking up the same sweats and oversized T-shirt I'd slept in the night before, I crawled back into bed and queued up Netflix. A COVID exposure scare had kept me home from work, so I propped my laptop on my spare pillow and pressed play on the Chicago-based *Holidate*. Less than 20 minutes into Netflix's holiday romcom original, our female lead, Sloane (Emma Roberts), bares her trope:

"Cockamamie," she says. "It's the only word I know that accurately describes every romantic comedy in history."

Unlike Sloane, I love rom-coms. I have a dad hat embroidered with "A Film by Nora Ephron," and I've seen and read everything she's

ever written. Midway through quarantine, I joined a rom-com writing group, though my first serious stab at testing out my own writerly, rom-com voice was in college. I wrote a melodramatic, darkly comedic essay about my ex-boyfriend's dog, Finley. My classmates and my teacher loved it, not because it was particularly well-written, but because most people—whether they believe them to be cockamamie or not—like rom-coms, and I realized early on I was more than willing to mine my own life within that familiar frame.

When it was my day to be workshoped, a girl I admired asked if I thought I'd ever see Finley again. She wanted to know if there was an alternate ending, one that just hadn't happened yet. "I might!" I replied, looking

Holidate

up from the page of notes I'd been scribbling down, already so excited to incorporate my peers' feedback into the next draft of "Love in the Time of the Canine Companion."

I never saw Finley again. But rom-coms only work if there's a hint of hope, even in the moments we dramatize to be our darkest. Because I was sad, and because I could, I wrote a window into a scene of my life on which the door was closed.

"There's always some fake reason the stars can't be together when you know they're going to be together from the poster," Sloane says, while she throws back champagne on New Year's Eve, sitting next to Jackson (Luke Bracey), the man who—you guessed it—we know she'll end up with from *Holidate*'s poster.

Sloane is "just south of 30-something," and staring down the barrel of yet another holiday unpartnered, when she agrees to be Jackson's platonic standing "holidate" for a calendar year of occasions (including Mother's Day—which Netflix sets up as a brunch at the boathouse, an occasion for which you obviously need a date).

Holidate premiered on October 28 to usher in Netflix's crop of original holiday programming and proceeded to hit the number one spot on the streaming platform its opening weekend. Despite Sloane's cynical perspective, *Holidate* works because it is a rom-com, one which audiences can easily identify as such.

Rom-coms have the power to challenge or align with the narratives we spin about our own lives. How we manage to identify ourselves in characters crafted to make us do exactly that is a testament to the genre's enduring power.

Set in Chicago, *Holidate* is not the first movie to capitalize on how the progression and distinctiveness of the city's seasons can perfectly backdrop the arc of a relationship fit for the big screen (or your laptop). It's not even the only Netflix original to do so this year—*Midnight at the Magnolia* is set in what I think is meant to be the West Loop.

While You Were Sleeping (1995) stars a mousy Sandra Bullock. Her job as a CTA worker, her regular order at the hot dog cart: "hot dog, mustard, Coke," and the long, meandering walk she and the unassumingly

rugged Bill Pullman take along the Chicago River all so perfectly contribute to a Chicago I recognize. Though, I prefer ketchup and onions, and ideally an Aperol spritz.

The Break-Up (2006), also Chicago-based, starts where most rom-coms don't—at the end. The entire movie is about carving out a new home for yourself in a city you've always shared. When Jennifer Aniston and Vince Vaughn bump into each other on the street several months post-breakup, they're both wrapped in winter coats. Jen's perfect hair is whipping a little wildly in Chicago's wind. They can't chat long—it's cold!—but their exchange is warm. They've both begun new chapters, and it's a good look. The kind of run-in you hope for (whenever we're allowed to leave the house again).

After a year spent inside, it's easy to spin wild tales of our own about who might be waiting for us outside when all of this is over. During these . . . unprecedented times, no one is immune to the spell.

I've gushed about Hinge matches to my sisters after only one date, and I've managed to assign significance to nearly every man I meet. Rom-coms can reinforce unrealistic ideas we have about who will come along when, and how long they might stay, but they've also served to make me think more creatively about the characters in my own rom-com narrative—even if the only end that serves is to temporarily make them more interesting to me IRL. When you're stuck inside, with nothing else to do, it's impossible not to think about your life in terms of a romantic comedy—you are your only source of entertainment, after all. While none of the guys I've met have landed next to me on the movie poster of my life, they have made my life more interesting—I can swing a golf club now, and I've made game-changing tweaks to my eggplant parmesan recipe. I have the city's best hand-cut giardiniera in my fridge, and have I mentioned my membership in rom-com club?

While watching Sloane and Jackson's love story unfold, I opened my bedroom window, pressed my nose to the screen, and breathed in scents—my neighbor's Christmas tree, dryer sheets, car exhaust—that define the holidays in this city I love. And as the wind from Lake Michigan wafted through and ruffled my sheets, rather than pulling it closed against the chill, I grabbed a second blanket, and kept the window cracked instead. **[F]**

[@kaylenralph](#)

Get showtimes and see reviews of everything playing this week at chicagoreader.com/movies.



NOW PLAYING

RR *Black Bear*

Black Bear sees Aubrey Plaza excel in her most nuanced role yet. Following Allison (Plaza), a filmmaker seeking solace from her tumultuous past at a rural retreat, the film runs on a relentless tension between the creative and her hosts, Gabe (Christopher Abbott) and Blair (Sarah Gadon). Both Blair and Gabe have their own artistic passions, but their pregnancy has sidelined those, a point of contention between the couple that fuels their contempt for one another. The disdain is on full display as they aggressively bicker in front of their guest. On the surface, the argument is about Blair's suspicion that Gabe is attracted to Allison. The conflict reaches a terrifying crescendo when it turns out her insecurities are, in fact, intuition. Then part two begins, digging deeper into the power dynamics of these characters, albeit in different roles. This bold switch-up is a marvel to watch and solidifies *Black Bear* as a smart and ambitious cultural commentary. —**BECCA JAMES** 104 min. [In wide release on VOD](#)

RR *Giving Voice*

This 2020 documentary follows a group of high school students participating in the August Wilson Monologue competition. Structured broadly as a set of intimate portraits of six young people across the country as they compete for the coveted chance to perform on Broadway, where the national finals of the competition are held, directors James D. Stern and Fernando Villena are careful in their capture of the expert monologues of these youth. Also captivating is the thread of biography about August Wilson's own illustrious career woven throughout, reflected upon by actors such as Denzel Washington and Viola Davis who acted in Wilson's plays. Though the film has the tendency to slip toward the saccharine and patronizing from time to time, the six young actors it follows shine brightly enough to carry the film to an inspiring close. —**NINA LI COOMES** 87 min. [Netflix](#)

RR *I'm Your Woman*

I'm Your Woman is a crime drama told from a new point of view. Set in the 1970s, the film follows Jean (Rachel Brosnahan), a woman forced to go on the run after her husband Eddie (Bill Heck) betrays his partners. A slow-moving mystery paired with an impeccable recreation of the time period pulls viewers into director Julia Hart's invigorating take on a genre that typically favors tough men making tougher calls. Allowing viewers to see what happens to the criminal's wife—you know, the one who normally gets sent away in the early scenes for her own safety—it also pushes characters that would usually be on the sidelines to the forefront. This includes Teri (Marsha Stephanie Blake) and Cal (Arinzé Kene), the compelling couple in charge of keeping Jean and her baby Harry (shout-out to Jameson and Justin Charles's perfect performances) alive. A wild ride with a woman at the wheel, it takes viewers on a familiar yet fresh journey. —**BECCA JAMES** 120 min. [Prime Video](#)

The Prom

The Prom, a Ryan Murphy adaptation of the 2018 Broadway musical by the same name, follows four fictional Broadway performers—two narcissistic has-beens (Meryl Streep and James Corden), a serial chorus girl (Nicole Kidman), and an irksome Juilliard graduate (Andrew Rannells)—in desperate need of some positive press. The group searches for a cause to back, a way to improve their public image, and they stumble upon the story of Emma (Jo Ellen Pellman), a gay highschooler in rural Indiana who is facing public backlash at wanting to bring a girl as her date to the prom. While the cinematography, production value, and almost unnecessarily-all-star cast make *The Prom* an OK film to watch—the musical it's based on has no legs to stand on, so the project never had a shot at being anything more than mediocre. Like so many other LGBTQ+ stories that go mainstream, *The Prom* was written by two white men (only one of them gay), resulting in a whitewashed, appallingly trauma-reductive, and predictable story surrounding pretty, feminine-presenting lesbians, unsupported by generic and forgetful Broadway melodies that bleed into one another. The writers allow

Giving Voice

the washed-up Broadway saviors to hog the screen time, rather than fleshing out Emma and her girlfriend, so everyone is two-dimensional, diminishing any hope of nuance and audience investment (especially in Pellman, who smiles literally the entire movie for some reason?). As a queer person and a lover of musicals, I wanted desperately to love it, but *The Prom* brought me little but frustration, and between this and suffering through *Happiest Season*, the long hunt for satisfying queer media continues. —**TARYN ALLEN** 130 min. [Netflix](#)

RR *Queer Japan*

Featuring a wide array of interviews from kinksters, club owners, drag artists, and politicians—Graham Kolbeins paints an electric and multifaceted portrait of queer culture in contemporary Japan. *Queer Japan* encapsulates the spirit of the nation's expansive LGBTQ+ community with a focus on nightlife and performance—both through drag and more unconventional art forms that you have to see to believe. But the film crucially takes a pivot from the glitz and glamour of queer aesthetics to also illustrate the reality of homophobia and anti-trans legislation that queer people in Japan grapple with everyday. *Queer Japan* is a refreshing look at queer identity not just because of its myriad of perspectives, but because the interviewees always strive towards a radical, collective queer power rather than community infighting and division that has become so commonplace in online queer communities. —**CODY CORRALL** 101 min. [12/11-12/24, Facets Virtual Cinema](#)

RR *Sound of Metal*

Ruben (Riz Ahmed) is in a stable place for the first time in his life: he's four years sober and touring as a drummer in a metal band with his longtime girlfriend (Olivia Cooke)—but his sense of the world shatters around him when he starts to rapidly lose his hearing. Before it can get any worse, Ruben is admitted to a rehabilitation-style facility where he adapts to his new normal and finds solace in a deaf community—but behind the scenes, Ruben is trying to raise money to get an implant and return to his old life as soon as possible. *Sound of Metal* peels back the internalized ableism surrounding deafness, especially in how it interrogates Ruben's desire to “fix” his condition and go back to what he perceives as normalcy. Riz Ahmed shines as a leading man at war with himself and the world around him, but the real heart of *Sound of Metal* lies in the care and empathy put forth in its sound design. —**CODY CORRALL** 130 min. [Prime Video](#)

RR *Through the Night*

Loira Limbal's feature directorial debut is likewise heartening and heart-rending as it presents a 24-hour daycare in New Rochelle, New York; Limbal has discussed in interviews the concept of conveying tenderness as

both a political ideology and an aesthetic, a symbiosis that's aptly reflected in this quietly profound documentary. Centered on Dee's Tots and its owners—husband-and-wife duo Deloris (“Nunu”) and Patrick Hogan, who, along with a few family members and employees, comprise the staff—the film employs a vérité perspective to convey the arduous ins and outs of running a 24-hour, at-home daycare. In addition to those running it, the film features some of the families it serves, each of whom relies on the Hogans' unparalleled flexibility, from a nurse who works overnight to a woman who has to maintain several jobs because she can't find one that provides enough hours, much less benefits. Limbal explores various interpretations of what it means to be a caregiver and how those doing it perform exhausting, often thankless tasks with little help from the government. The film subtly exposes a system that wasn't designed to help those who need it most; Limbal and editor Malika Zouhali-Worrall compose a penetrating text that says more than what's revealed on screen, with invisible footnotes elucidating the socio-political climate in which such crises originate. Most importantly, however, Limbal crafts a portrait of some truly extraordinary people, whom the audience comes away better for now knowing. —**KATHLEEN SACHS** 76 min. [12/11-12/24, Facets Virtual Cinema](#)

RR *The Twentieth Century*

Winnipeg-born writer-director Matthew Rankin's feature debut is at once an idiosyncratic oddity and a veritable pastiche: what's unique about it amuses and what it references—specifically the films of fellow Winnipegger Guy Maddin—echoes in this satire-cum-revisionist biopic about William Lyon Mackenzie King (Dan Beirne), Canada's longest-serving prime minister. Over the course of ten chapters, King struggles to assume the role on the brink of the twentieth century, a rise to power here realized through a series of inane competitions and a picaresque journey that involves King trying to find love—he's torn between the governor general's daughter (Catherine St-Laurent) and his ailing mother's nurse (Sarianne Cormier)—all while hiding his predilection for sniffing ladies' shoes. It's a mix of Maddin's nostalgia-laden hodgepodes and absurd sketch comedy, with a bit of grotesque camp à la *Rocky Horror* thrown in for good measure. Most striking about the film is its visual aesthetic: it was shot on 16mm, and various locales are, in contrast to the mostly human cast, represented by colorfully animated Art Deco-like tableaux that vaguely recall those of German silhouette animator Lotte Reiniger. Rankin has noted that he was inspired by having read King's diary while at university; as a biopic it penetrates the pathos of its ostensible subject more than it attempts to be faithful to any sort of historical (or, in this case, ahistorical) scenario it's suggesting. It also functions as a critique of Canada's particular brand of self-mythologizing, which might challenge foreign audiences' perceptions of the Great (?) White North. —**KATHLEEN SACHS** 90 min. [Music Box Theatre Virtual Cinema](#)



Will **BLOODSHOT** **RECORDS** stay in the saddle?

Internal strife, unpaid royalties, and the looming possibility of a sale have forced the venerable Chicago indie label to a crossroads.

By **MARK GUARINO**

Bloodshot Records, the beloved Chicago indie label that created a home for “insurgent country,” is suffering from an insurgency of its own making.

For nearly two years Bloodshot has been wracked by a staff revolt against one of its founders, by a #MeToo scandal implicating its top seller, by allegations of unpaid royalties, and by a bitter falling out between Rob Miller and Nan Warshaw, the unlikely partners who’d helped launch the business in 1993.

Bloodshot’s future is unclear. Since this past summer, it’s been for sale. It hired a New York company to perform an external valuation in April 2019, back when it still seemed possible that one of the owners would buy out the other. Neither Miller nor Warshaw will confirm the results, but staffer Nina Stiener says the label’s value was estimated at \$3.2 million. No deal has yet been signed, though, most likely because investors tend to recoil from royalty disputes and breached contracts—and because the Bloodshot catalog no longer includes some of the label’s best-selling records, whose rights have reverted to the creators.

Some artists on the Bloodshot roster are complaining that their careers are in limbo. Veteran musicians who’ve been with the label since its earliest days fear it will collapse, in yet another blow to a Chicago music scene already depleted by the pandemic.

“I’m hugely sad, because I felt personally invested in the company, and they provided a valuable venue for my peculiar interests and collaborations,” says Jon Langford, Bloodshot’s longest-term and most prolific artist. “Their 26-year run is actually a remarkable achievement.”

Like Sub Pop, which documented a Seattle scene that would soon blow up nationwide, Bloodshot gave voice to a fertile Chicago music community—artists that Miller and Warshaw saw emerging in local clubs such as Lounge Ax and Lower Links. The label debuted in 1994 with *For a Life of Sin: A Compilation of Insurgent Chicago Country*, which doubled as a mission statement.

The artists involved spanned generations, genders, and styles: along with the likes of Langford, Freakwater, and the Texas Rubies, the collection included two tracks by elder statesmen the Sundowners, known for their 30-year residency at downtown country bar the Double R Ranch, and the first solo release by a local bluegrass player named Robbie Fulks. The recordings generally adopted a punky, lo-fi aesthetic—most were cut live, with very little overdubbing, reverb, or compression, to capture the feel of a rough-and-ready show. The sound of *For a Life of Sin* is the sound of a red-hot barroom floor late on a Saturday night.

Success came swiftly. By the end of the 90s,

Bloodshot had built a roster of quirky iconoclasts—Fulks, Langford’s Waco Brothers, the Old 97’s, Neko Case, the Sadies, the Blacks, Trailer Bride, Split Lip Rayfield, Alejandro Escovedo, Ryan Adams—who won over audiences with charmingly raucous gigs. Together they helped push what was soon labeled “Americana” into the national spotlight. Some of these artists ended up signing more lucrative deals at bigger labels, an indirect compliment to Bloodshot’s ear. And competing labels popped up—Yep Roc, New West, Anti-, ATO, Lost Highway—to chase the trend, many of them subsidiaries of deep-pocketed majors.

Warshaw, 58, and Miller, 55, met in 1993 at Crash Palace, where Warshaw was spinning country records on Wednesday nights (the bar would become Delilah’s later that year). She was well-known around town as a punk raconteur and had been promoting, booking, and managing bands for years. Her reputation as a connector was confirmed when Kurt Cobain’s diaries were posthumously published in 2002: “Call Nan Warshaw” appears on his to-do list.

Miller had moved to Chicago in 1991 from Ann Arbor, where he’d helped produce shows for a local promoter and DJed on a local radio station. Warshaw introduced Miller to Eric Babcock, who’d become Bloodshot’s third founder—and the only one with actual record-label experience. He’d already worked for years at roots-music imprints Flying Fish and Blind Pig and knew the basics.

“It was clear that they knew about old-school country and that they loved it,” Babcock says. “And that they really had a really strong impulse to try to do something for the sake of this scene that we were all part of and really enjoyed.”

As the three of them planned the *Life of Sin* release, they convinced Langford to not just supply a track but also design the artwork. They pressed 1,000 copies, which sold out in months. They’d discovered a fan base, across the U.S. and overseas, that was clamoring for this music that had yet to be declared a genre.

By 2019, Bloodshot had come a long way. Though Babcock had left in 1997, the label had survived its growing pains and the digital revolution that decimated sales of physical music media. It survived in part because it expanded its sound to include neosoul, garage rock, and a new crop of singer-songwriters such as Justin Townes Earle, Luke Winslow-King, Laura Jane Grace, Sarah Shook, and Lydia Loveless.

The first domino to fall had nothing to do with changing tastes or business paradigms. In February 2019 a *New York Times* article reported allegations that Ryan Adams had psychologically abused several women, including wife Mandy Moore, and was engaging in sexually exploitive texts and phone calls with a minor. That same week, the FBI opened an investigation and

Still lifes from Bloodshot headquarters

📷 MATTHEW GILSON FOR CHICAGO READER



chicagoreader.com/donate

Can you imagine Chicago without the *Chicago Reader*?

This December, we are asking 1,000 people to donate to the *Chicago Reader* to prove community-funded journalism is the way of the future. Donate today and keep Chicago independent.





Rob Miller (left) and Nan Warshaw helped found Bloodshot Records in 1993, but since 2019 they've been going through what Warshaw calls a "business divorce"—and it hasn't been an amicable one.  COURTESY BLOODSHOT RECORDS (MILLER); PAUL BEATY (WARSHAW)

continued from 45

a forthcoming Capitol Records album and tour were canceled.

At that point, Bloodshot had had no contact with Adams for several years. His 2000 solo debut, *Heartbreaker*, was his only Bloodshot album, but it had been a game changer for the label—its consistently robust sales kept the lights on for years. Miller says he was hesitant to insert himself into a situation he felt had nothing to do with Bloodshot, but reporters were calling for a statement and the label's staff looked to him to make a public denunciation. "It was as banal as possible," he says of what he wrote. "I didn't know the guy and hadn't talked to him or been in the same room with him for over 15 years."

Miller's post about Adams on Bloodshot's social media channels had an unintended consequence. Ohio singer-songwriter Lydia Loveless, who'd released three full-length albums for the label since 2011, revealed on Instagram that "for years" she had been sexually harassed, both verbally and physically, by musician Mark Panick, Warshaw's longtime domestic partner, at Bloodshot events and her own shows. "I didn't know who to tell about these behaviors because I felt afraid," she wrote. "I felt completely betrayed by Nan." She blamed the label "for allowing a man to grope, paw at and mentally disturb me for over five years."

Panick declined to be interviewed for this article. But not long after the Loveless post, he was quoted in a *Chicago Tribune* story by Greg Kot: "I do not remember the events Lydia describes in the same way. But I truly regret making her feel like that and really wish I'd have understood that at the moment."

Warshaw and Miller posted their own state-

ments to social media. Warshaw said that she was stepping away from the label. "I apologize for any hell or even awkwardness I put Lydia or anyone through, due to my actions or in-actions," she wrote. Miller revealed that he and Loveless had talked about the situation multiple times over nearly three years and that he'd addressed it privately as soon as he'd heard. He said he'd "encouraged her to be frank and forthcoming about it all" when she was comfortable. "I did not feel it was our place to go public with this until she was ready," he wrote. Miller also denounced Panick, calling him a "caveman," and said he'd been "permanently banned" from all Bloodshot shows and events as well as from any contact with label staff or artists.

The following month, Bloodshot announced that Warshaw wasn't just stepping away but resigning. Miller would "continue the work" of the label "while ensuring that the core values of the company are consistently represented by all associated."

The situation created shock waves on many levels. For years Bloodshot had made a point of signing and promoting women artists, and Warshaw regularly appeared on industry panels advocating for advancing women in all sectors of the recording industry. But Panick's presence in the office and at shows had clearly been a problem for years, and when Miller learned what was happening, he says he told Warshaw and the staff that Panick was unwelcome—long before anything made the news. "It certainly was a point of friction, there's no doubt about that," says Anthony Nguyen, a former staffer.

Warshaw, who met Panick in 1981, would not discuss Loveless's allegations for this story. ("The details . . . are not my experience to talk about.") She says she and Panick have spent

"thousands of hours" discussing it in order to "move forward in a positive way," and that the situation has "caused tremendous reflection" for the couple. "We have a wonderfully honest and loving relationship," she says. "He's my best friend."

Warshaw claims that Miller used the allegations to force her out, concealing details from her so that she'd end up taking the fall when the full story came out. Nearly two years before Loveless's post, she says, Miller told her "out of nowhere" that a female Bloodshot artist had confided in him that Panick was sexually harassing her. He didn't initially name the artist or get into specifics about Panick's misdeeds. Warshaw says those omissions left her powerless to rectify the situation and set her up to appear unsympathetic.

"I dedicated 25 years of my life to running an indie record label, and during our most difficult period my [business] partner chose to work against me rather than work through this crisis together," she says. "He gave me an ultimatum to break up my family or leave the record label I love."

Warshaw points to a staff meeting Miller announced the day Loveless went public. He'd asked Warshaw to stay away because, he said, her presence would be uncomfortable for all parties—and she'd agreed. "I now see that as a turning point where Rob solidified the staff against me," she says.

Miller calls this claim "absurd."

"I was her last ally," he says. "I tried to have cooler heads prevail, to give her a few months to step away, show contrition, admit fault. I had no desire to take over all her duties. It was a terrifying prospect for me to not have a partner that I had for all these years."

He adds that Warshaw should've known the allegations he'd originally shared involved Loveless. "I said it was an artist at our South by Southwest showcase that year," he explains. "Lydia was, that year, the only female artist. I assumed, falsely, that Nan could extrapolate that I didn't mean that the Waco Brothers were being harassed."

Even with Warshaw gone, everyone expected Bloodshot to continue. But then things got worse.

Since the beginning, both Warshaw and Miller had insisted that Bloodshot wouldn't resort to the sleazy but technically legal business practices common in their industry. They would protect artists and put their interests first. Warshaw describes her outlook as similar to that of a nonprofit—she wasn't in it to get rich—and Miller agrees that the label's focus on artists' needs set it apart. "I like to think because we were earnest and up-front and not in the power centers of the industry, we could behave in a way that was very organic and on a scale that was comfortable for everyone," he says.

But good intentions are one thing, and outcomes are another. In early 2019, after Warshaw's exit, Bloodshot conducted an internal investigation to sort out its finances—since Warshaw had been in charge of much of the bookkeeping, it had to be reassigned. This process revealed that Bloodshot had shorted many of its artists money. Label staffer Nina Stiener, tasked by Miller to digitize more than two decades of paperwork Warshaw left behind, estimates that Bloodshot owes at least \$500,000 in unpaid royalties and other related earnings to artists and songwriters. Nobody would say how many have been affected.



continued from 47

Miller says that after the discovery of this mess he offered to resign and sell his half of the label to Warsaw (she owns the other 50 percent). She declined, suggesting that because she “wanted this business divorce to resolve quickly” she would sell Miller her share instead.

Miller refused. He didn’t trust the assessment of Bloodshot’s worth, he says, because the valuation company the label had hired hadn’t taken into account the damage from the Panic situation or the unresolved obligations to its artists. The appraisal also assumed Bloodshot would remain profitable through 2020. In reality, because of internal strife and the pandemic, its output this year has amounted to a single release.

Miller and Warsaw not only disagree about the company’s true value but also about the amounts it owes its artists (neither would discuss numbers on the record). An auditing firm would realistically solve this problem, but none has been hired. Warsaw says both she and Miller would have to agree to the expense of hiring such a firm, but he hasn’t responded to her request. Miller denies that Warsaw has

ever asked.

To Miller, the blame for the accounting irregularities rests squarely on Warsaw’s shoulders. Their division of labor, though never etched into an official corporate agreement, charged him with manufacturing and logistics (shipping, distribution, mail order) as well as writing marketing and advertising copy. Warsaw was responsible for legal matters and for generating and paying mechanical royalty statements and master royalty statements, plus arranging payouts on the licensing agreements the label negotiated for its artists. They operated together, Miller says, by “mutual trust.”

“Our jobs were very siloed. Obviously, in hindsight, that was a structural mistake. I didn’t check her work; she didn’t check mine,” he says. He calls the number of royalty obligations he found once Warsaw left “breathtaking.”

“I was not expecting that at all. It was a total surprise,” he says. “I had trusted she was doing her job fully and consistently, as I always tried to do.”

Stiener, 26, spent three months in early 2019 organizing and digitizing approximately 10,000 documents Warsaw left behind in stacks in her

office, plus about 15 boxes of contracts, invoices, and other material from the label’s basement. One problem is that much of the accounting was still being done manually in Microsoft Word. The label hadn’t switched to Excel, a common spreadsheet software for financial documents, until 2015.

Once everything was accounted for, the process to assess payouts to artists was just as daunting. Stiener discovered the label was paying master royalties to a handful of marquee artists—Alejandro Escovedo, Justin Townes Earle, Graham Parker, Ryan Adams—but to no one else. (Loosely speaking, master royalties go to artists, mechanical royalties to songwriters.) Artists with relatively modest sales, including the Bottle Rockets, Cordero, Al Scorch, and Ha Ha Tonka, had not seen payments since 2010. Stiener says that Loveless had only recouped \$2,000 after three albums, while Memphis-based singer-songwriter Cory Branan, who also has three records on the label, is owed a little more than \$10,000.

“If they can’t pay, I’d like my records back,” says Branan, who claims he hasn’t received royalty statements in two years—which if true

would put the label in breach of contract. Warsaw, he adds, has not responded to his e-mails or requests to audit the books.

“There was no attempt to address any of those issues,” he says. “Any potential buyers need to know this is happening.” He worries that a sale of the label would mean he’d lose any recourse to retain his masters “or to see some of that money.”

Still, like other artists interviewed for this story, Branan is confident that “incompetence,” not corruption, is the root of the problem. “I hesitate to attribute anything devious to all of this,” he says. But Branan says he can’t justify how he learned Bloodshot was for sale: not through Warsaw or Miller but through Stiener. “Selling the label without telling the artists is, to me, unconscionable,” he says.

Fulks, one of Bloodshot’s prestige artists, is owed about \$10,000 in royalties for his first two records, says Stiener. Fulks says he signed a deal in 1996 whose terms were “aggressive and modeled on practices of much larger companies,” in contradiction of the label’s self-image as friendly to artists. But because at the time he’d already invested 15 years into his career

with no other offers, he had little leverage. Fulks remembers a prescient warning from his attorney: “You’ll lose more money the more records you sell for them.”

“I felt educated in the style and approach of the company—that it was stingy and paternalistic—and felt convinced that I needed to deliver their two records, expect little money or reward, and move on to a place whose stinginess and paternalism might at least be justified by higher budgets,” Fulks explains via e-mail. He says that when he renegotiated his Bloodshot contract with Warshaw in 1999, she admitted to him that the earlier arrangement was unfair. He ended up re-signing with a far simpler contract—just one page promising a 50-50 payout for new recordings. He’s been paid ever since, he says.

In March 2020, Bloodshot and Warshaw passed documents back and forth in a united effort to resolve the delinquency issues. But even that process has hit roadblocks. The label gave Warshaw a mirrored copy of her company hard drive, but she says it had been restructured without her permission, making it difficult for her to locate files. “I no longer have access to everything that was once on the computer,” she says.

Stiener says it was hard to get clear answers from Warshaw, and that by June she’d stopped cooperating altogether. In some instances, Stiener and other staff worked to create corrected versions of what she says were erroneous royalty statements Warshaw had on file. Miller says a single factor distinguished the new statements: “Math.”

“I found one Robbie [Fulks] statement where the math is so wrong. She was supposed to carry a zero so he was owed \$10,000, not \$1,000,” Stiener says. “I did not defer to her statements at all [after that], because I could prove my numbers.”

Warshaw says she was committed to a smooth transition, but that Miller thwarted that effort. In April 2019, Miller had allowed her to return to the office to put her files in order. She says she arrived to find “he had removed 25 years of files from my filing cabinets, including all historic artist contracts.” She also says she was locked out of key business accounts. Miller does not deny this, but he says the situation has since changed: today Warshaw has full access to all accounts, and she doesn’t let him into one.

“If there were moments early on when she was [locked out], it was accidental. We were operating in a crisis. We were trying to figure out aspects of the job we had never done. Mistakes were made, but they were rectified,” he says. “I have nothing to hide from her.”

For her part, Warshaw admits she is “not perfect—no human is.”

“Whatever royalties may still be due, I have insisted that all artists be paid in full and that the artists are paid before Rob or I see any profit,” she says. “I continue working to make sure every artist is accounted for and fully paid.”

When it comes to Bloodshot’s ongoing conversations with artists about their royalties, however, Miller says Warshaw “continues to disagree, without showing why, about what our obligations are.” The last time Warshaw asked Miller to buy her out was in January 2020, and he once again turned her offer down.

“It was not reasonable,” he says, in part because it didn’t take into consideration the royalty issues. “None of the information we have shared with her over the months has dissuaded her from believing what we think is an inaccurate appraisal.”

Current Bloodshot employees contacted for this story would not speak on the record for fear of reprisal, but their frustration is clear. In July, they collectively posted an open letter to the label’s artists, summarizing the royalty discrepancies and blasting Warshaw for keeping everyone in the dark about the terms of a potential sale. “We believe this potential sale could jeopardize the artists’ and songwriters’ ability to obtain fair compensation and trustworthy control of their work,” they wrote.

Warshaw responded through attorney Jeff Becker with a cease-and-desist order threatening legal action against each staffer, a step that she claimed was necessary “to inform those who were spreading misinformation to immediately stop doing so, in an effort to ensure that only accurate and factual information was being shared with the artists.”

“I really had no choice,” she says. In a copy of the cease-and-desist letter obtained by the *Reader*, Becker said the staff’s claims were “entirely misinformed” because they were not privy to Warshaw’s “confidential negotiations” with Miller.

Nonetheless, the lack of communication “has been frustrating” for the label’s artists and their managers, says Kathie Russell, an attorney who represents Bloodshot artist Sarah Shook. She sides with the staffers. “They are scared,” she says. “They were able to give us information. I don’t blame them for doing so. Why in the world would Nan purposely try to shield artists on the label from information?”

If neither Miller nor Warshaw buys out the other, it seems likely that a third party will purchase at least part of Bloodshot. For private equity groups and other investors, record labels are desirable acquisitions because of their back catalogs, says Stephen Ma, a Los Angeles-based

entertainment attorney who represents publishing companies. Chicago indie Victory Records, which specializes in hardcore and metalcore and has several gold and platinum releases in its catalog, sold to Concord in summer 2019 for an estimated \$30 million.

“The market’s pretty strong for catalogs right now, because everybody needs content,” Ma explains. “There are so many services now, so many platforms that didn’t exist ten years ago, and music is a big part of that. It’s a real source of revenue.”

Streaming has made publishing a more lucrative and reliable asset for investors than live entertainment. This month, the Universal Music Publishing Group announced it had purchased Bob Dylan’s entire catalog of songs for an estimated \$300 million. To take advantage of the increasing premium placed on their work, younger artists such as the Killers and Calvin Harris are also selling their publishing catalogs to private equity firms.

The demand for indie-label catalogs is especially high. With so many major-label catalogs already spoken for, investors sense that the number of available catalogs able to stand the test of time is dwindling.

“There’s some sense of concern of scarcity that’s coming for indie content,” says Keith Bernstein, CEO of Royalty Review Council, a California firm that performs financial due diligence for investors interested in entertainment properties. “Masters are unique, and the good stuff that you want is either disappearing or seldom becomes available—and if it’s something that you want that becomes available, you need to act fast. You’re seeing people feel if they don’t buy something that is available right now, owning the type of catalog with great masters like they visualized will not necessarily happen. There are aggressive buyers right now and some are willing to pay higher [prices]—and that’s also stimulating music copyright owners to sell. One is feeding the other.”

Bernstein notes that despite this strong demand, most buyers will walk away if a label’s historical income doesn’t appear fully supported by proper documentation, or if royalty accounting doesn’t seem accurate based on past record sales.

“Usually, the labels with solid business-management people and good attorneys get the deals done faster because everything is well-organized and they are able to quickly answer questions raised,” he says.

“But sometimes, when it feels like things are dysfunctional and people at the label do not get along, that’s where things can fall apart. There’s more that goes into evaluating a catalog than just the numbers.”

This month, Bloodshot is considering a deal with a potential buyer that would employ what’s

called a holdback model—a process that, according to Bernstein, places a percentage of the buyer’s money into an escrow account that can be used to iron out any royalty inconsistencies.

The purchase could also involve the acquisition of only a portion of the label’s catalog, according to a source close to the potential transaction (who wishes to remain unnamed because they’re not authorized to speak publicly about the deal). This would let the Bloodshot name remain with the label, and Miller or Warshaw would have the option to continue running the company.

This type of transaction could “breathe new life into Bloodshot,” says the source, allowing the label to work with longtime artists on future releases and even sign new ones. A deal like this could also do more to “keep the catalog alive,” because the new owner would have access to more licensing opportunities across new media platforms, possibly giving artists greater exposure and earning potential.

This anonymous speculation suggests that the potential new owner at the table is likely an established music company, not a private equity firm.

Stiener says that if the sale does not happen soon and more time drags on without answers, Bloodshot’s artists may feel forced to choose “the nuclear option.” At least 25 of them have signed on to a class-action lawsuit over missing royalties, organized by Russell but not yet filed. Their fear is that terms established with a new owner will not address what they are owed. “The artists prefer the label to survive because they know we are good with the money,” Stiener says.

For now, everybody is waiting. This year has already denied Bloodshot’s musicians touring income, put their health at risk, and trashed the infrastructure of their industry. The idea that their record label might collapse only adds to their anxiety.

Among those musicians is Los Angeles-based Jason Hawk Harris, who came aboard with Bloodshot in November 2018—he was the last artist it signed before business hit the skids. Joining the Bloodshot roster, he said, was a dream come true. “It’s a legendary record label,” he says. And Miller and Warshaw acted on their reputation by giving him “complete artistic control.”

His hope now is that Miller will continue to lead the label and Warshaw will exit through a sale.

“Bloodshot is the perfect record label for me. I get to do the music that I want with people I trust to protect and guide my career,” he says. “But who knows the future? A thousand things could happen.” ■

🐦 @markguarino



CHICAGOANS OF NOTE

Adam Gogola, front man of Blind Adam & the Federal League

“When you look around your community, it’s easy to help the people around you. And once you start doing that, it’s easier to understand how we can effect change.”

As told to **JAMIE LUDWIG**

Adam Gogola, 35, sings and plays guitar for Chicago punk band Blind Adam & the Federal League. He believes that music and social action can and should mix, and during the pandemic he and his bandmates have helped run a series of streaming benefit concerts and launched a mutual-aid program for their unhoused neighbors called the People’s Pizza Party. Donations can be made via Venmo at @peoplespizzaparty.

Growing up with punk rock music, there would always be a table at the shows for organizations like Anti-Racist Action or Food Not Bombs. I was in a band called Article 57, and we’d try to do our own version of that. We were involved in the antiwar movement and grew up playing at Fireside.

We always try to incorporate something into whatever we do that’s bigger than just our band. When the pandemic hit in March, we were getting ready to release our second full-length, which we’d recorded back in October with Chris No. 2 from Anti-Flag. Those guys kind of took me under their wing when I was maybe 15 years old and showed me that there’s not as many barriers to activism as people think there are. It’s as easy as finding people who are doing the work and giving them a few minutes to speak onstage, or donating some money from merch or ticket sales and finding ethical companies to print your T-shirts.

Our record was going to come out on A-F Records, probably in June. We were supposed to play the Fest in Gainesville and tour all

by ARIEL THOMAS

over the country, but when those plans got put on hold we immediately tried to figure out what we could do.

I reached out to my friend Joe Tessone, who owns Mystery Street recording studio in Lincoln Park, and my friends at the Night Ministry. We set up a livestream series from Mystery Street with a few other local artists. That was really successful; we raised over \$1,000.

We decided to make it a weekly thing. We did that for nine weeks. We raised money for the Night Ministry for three episodes, and then for an independent science lab in Virginia called Indie Lab, which was one of the first nonprofits to make rapid-result test kits that they could widely distribute for free. And they were also making PPE for frontline workers who couldn’t afford their own.

After we finished the last few episodes at the end of May, raising money for Brave Space Alliance, I needed to take a break because I’m still working a full-time job. About a week later, George Floyd was murdered. I don’t even know how many protests I went to over the summer—it was almost every day for two months. And we saw so many opportunities for community building.

The People’s Pizza Party started because Brave Space Alliance was asking for supplies, and we have our 15-passenger tour van. We put out on social media, “Hey, our friends at Brave Space were asking for supplies. If anybody wants to send us some money, we’ll post the receipt, and we’ll go to Costco and try and get as much of this stuff as we can fit in the van.” We raised over \$2,000 in a couple of days.

One person who replied was my buddy Jeff Schaller, who plays in another local band [Jeff Schaller & the Long Way Home]. Another buddy who replied was Mike Popek, the general manager at Dante’s Tavern in Humboldt Park. After the supply run, we had a few hundred dollars left over. Dante’s gave us a discount, so we ordered a ton of pizzas. We dropped a few off at the Night Ministry and a few of the houseless encampments around the northwest side. That was in mid-July, and we’ve done it every single Sunday since.

We’re not an official 501(c)(3). We want people to know that a lot of people who are helping are the same people who are demonized in the media as being socialists or antifa or whatever—and we are antifascist. So it’s

about helping people and having fun, but it’s not disconnected from the politics.

In a typical week, we’ll make a few social media posts encouraging people to donate or share the posts. There’s a rotating group of people that will help us out. We’ll get the supplies, and then on Sunday, we’ll place an order at Dante’s—usually 15 to 20 pizzas total. We’ll start at the Night Ministry, and hit up maybe six of the encampments from there. We try to feed between 40 and 80 people a week.

The whole thing takes about two hours, but we’ll stay and hang out and talk to people. A lot of these folks now have our phone numbers, and they’ll ask us for supplies. Most of the people that we serve are already connected with organizations like the Night Ministry or Chicago Coalition for the Homeless, but we get requests for bus passes, socks, jackets, and blankets. We’ve also seen a dozen or so people transition into stable housing in the four or five months that we’ve been doing this.

Donations have kind of slowed down after the CARES Act expired, but they’re consistent. Dante’s does a Sunday Solidarity Slice at their Humboldt Park location, and they try to work with other folks in the community, like Alex Palermo from the band Typesetter, who started making vegan sausages and pepperoni. Dante’s isn’t giving us a discount anymore, because they’re kind of struggling too, but the donations from the Solidarity Slices end up paying for two or three of the pizzas. And our weekly order helps to sustain them. Another way people can help is to call Dante’s and pre-purchase a pizza so we can distribute it.

We’ve had a lot of people reach out and be like, “How do you guys do this?” When you turn on TV and you’re watching whoever is explaining what horrible things the Trump administration is doing to subvert democracy and continue to kill people with the coronavirus, it can feel like, “Oh my God, what do I do? This is daunting. The police are killing people, and if I go outside, I’m gonna catch this virus.”

Sometimes it’s really overwhelming. But when you step away from that a bit and look around your community, it’s easy to help the people around you. And once you start doing that, it’s easier to understand how we can effect change, whether or not another relief package is coming from Washington, D.C. **FA**

@unlistenmusic

Americans can finally grow hair so thick “It will cover up your bald spots,” says top US Doctor

Clinical trials show a new hair loss breakthrough can both help men and women naturally regrow a thick, full head of hair – without drugs, surgery, or side effects

Thousands are rushing to get a new hair restoration method based on surprising new studies from the University of California.

It is the world's first and only hair loss solution that revives dead hair follicles. And studies confirm it helps men and women regrow a thick, full head of hair, even after years of balding.

Now, with news of this breakthrough spreading like wildfire — the manufacturers are struggling to keep up with overwhelming demand.

That's because, unlike other methods, it is prescription-free, drug-free, and has no side effects. And while hair transplants can cost \$4,000 or more, this new approach costs pennies on the dollar and doesn't involve going to the doctor's office.

Instead, it leverages cutting-edge technology to prevent hair loss, fill-in embarrassing bald spots, and renourish thinning hair — with results you can see and feel in 30 days or less.

As Jeanne F. from San Diego, CA reports: “*When my husband began to use this product, all he had on top of his head was fuzz. His hair began to grow after 30 days and now it is about 2 to 3 inches long!*”

Surprising Truth About Hair Loss

It is commonly believed that hair loss is hereditary.

Unfortunately, most people think there is nothing they can do to stop it. However, while many doctors will tell you that thinning hair, a receding hairline, and bald spots are due to your genetics, this is not the whole story.

“While genetics play a role, it's not the main reason you lose hair,” says Dr. Al Sears, the nation's top anti-aging doctor. “And surprisingly it's not just your age, thyroid, hormones, stress, or a vitamin deficiency, either.”

The latest scientific research reveals that hair loss is primarily caused by the stem cells in your hair follicles dying.

“This discovery is a true breakthrough because by reviving these stem cells on your scalp, you can stop hair loss dead in its tracks and trigger new hair growth, even in areas that have been thinning for years,” explains Dr. Sears.

Now, at his world-famous clinic, the Sears Institute for Anti-Aging Medicine in Palm Beach, Florida, Dr. Sears and his team have used this game-changing discovery to develop a brand-new hair restoration formula that is taking the country by storm.

Sold under the name **Re-Nourish**, it is flying off the shelves with men and women of all ages raving about the results it delivers.

“*I have seen a significant improvement in hair growth. Previously, you could see thinning areas at the back of my head and now hair has grown over it,*” says Peter W. from Ontario, Canada.

And Susan D. from Fort Pierce, Florida reports, “*My hair was thinning. So, I began to use Re-Nourish every day on the front part of my scalp. Now I have thicker hair.*”

Regrows Hair In Just 30 Days

Scientists now know that stem cells are the lifeblood of your hair follicles.

Research from the University of California shows they're the reason you're able to grow hair. However, these stem cells aren't always active. In fact, studies reveal they're only active during certain phases of the hair growth cycle.

“Your hair grows in three phases,” explains Dr. Sears. “First, you have the anagen phase, the hair growing phase. Then the catagen phase, when hair gets ready to shed. And finally, the telogen phase, where your hair is pushed from the follicle and falls out.”

As you get older it becomes harder for your hair follicles to complete this three-phase cycle. The results? Your hairs get stuck in the telogen phase. This is when they start falling out and stop regrowing, no matter what you try.

This process doesn't happen overnight, says Dr. Sears.

“At first, your hair dries out, becoming brittle, thin, and harder to style. Then, you start finding hairs on your pillow and down the drain. Finally, you're left with bald spots that age you prematurely.”

Fortunately, **Re-Nourish** puts a stop to this. It revives the dead stem cells in your hair follicles and reactivates your hair's three-phase cycle, triggering new growth in as little as 30 days — even in areas that've been balding for years.

Dr. Al Sears, M.D., is America's leading anti-aging expert. He's authored more than 500 scientific papers, and his discoveries have appeared on more than 50 media outlets including, ABC News, CNN, ESPN, Discovery Channel, National Geographic, Lifetime, and many more.

Reawakens Dead Hair Follicles

For years, scientists couldn't figure out why hair follicle stem cells died.

However, a study from the University of California finally found the answer.

It has to do with T-cells — an important immune cell in your body. The researchers discovered these T-cells are the only way to command hair follicles to grow new hair.

More importantly, they showed that T-cells helped revive the stem cells in your hair follicles — spurring new growth, filling in bald spots and natural hairline.



Breakthrough research proves this discovery helps fill-in bald spots, re-nourishes thinning hair, and leads to noticeable growth in as little as 30 days.

Re-Nourish uses a unique blend of all-natural ingredients. By spraying it on your hair once per day, scientific studies show you can revive dead stem cells and improve the appearance of thicker, fuller hair.

For example, the key nutrient of **Re-Nourish** was tested on a group of severely balding women.

After 6 months, nearly 70% of the women saw significant improvement in hair growth. Their hair was noticeably fuller, thicker, and healthier looking. Most exciting of all, they grew new hair on parts of their scalp that had been bald for years.

In another study, Italian researchers gathered a group of both men and women with thinning hair and applied the core ingredient of **Re-Nourish**. After 12 weeks, they reported a staggering 74% increase in hair growth.

“*It's really mind-boggling that my hair started growing back,*” says Zan R., another **Re-Nourish** customer.

With results like this, it's no surprise that demand for **Re-Nourish** is soaring. Thousands of men and women are scrambling to get their hands on the limited-supply available.

Re-Nourish is not currently available in any store at any price. But we've secured a small batch for our readers.

Try Re-Nourish 100% Risk-Free

For the next 48-hours, Dr. Sears is offering readers a risk-free trial of **Re-Nourish**.

Dr. Sears feels so strongly about this product that he is backing every order with a risk-free, 100% money-back guarantee. To take advantage of this special offer, simply call the Sears Toll-Free Health Hotline at 1-800-380-0699 now. Use Promo Code NP1120RN876 when you call in.

[EDITOR'S NOTE]: Due to recent media exposure for **Re-Nourish**, the **Sears Institute for Anti-Aging Medicine** is experiencing unprecedented demand. If the phone line is busy when you call, please try again to avoid missing this special one-time-only offer.

THESE STATEMENTS HAVE NOT BEEN EVALUATED BY THE FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION. THIS PRODUCT IS NOT INTENDED TO DIAGNOSE, TREAT, CURE OR PREVENT ANY DISEASE. RESULTS MAY VARY.

PICK OF THE WEEK

New Goo's patchwork bedroom pop creates its own peculiar giddiness



PETER ZWARYCZ

NEW GOO, *PICTURE OF A PICTURE*

Self-released

newgoo.bandcamp.com/album/picture-of-a-picture

CHICAGO SINGER-SONGWRITER KELSO ASHBY makes whimsical bedroom pop as New Goo, stacking lo-fi percussion, spectral synths, and featherweight vocals. On their new self-released album, *Picture of a Picture*, they draw from the magnetic, euphoric throb of house music, which dovetails with the raw underpinnings in their intimate material. “Tension” cycles among several threadbare drum loops that hustle the song’s limber funk bass line through wobbly keyboard notes and electronic froufrou. Ashby relies on a limited palette of synthetic sounds, which lends a comforting familiarity even to their strange, unpredictable rearrangements of blinking keys and cracked percussion. Ashby’s peculiar sonic choices often sharpen New Goo’s songs rather than distracting from them: on “Nothingpainsme,” the accordionlike wheezing that cradles their tender, swooning chorus vocal creates a distinctive kind of pop giddiness.

—LEOR GALIL

ALUNA, *RENAISSANCE*

Mad Descent

aluna.site

This summer UK dance-music singer-songwriter Aluna released her solo debut, *Renaissance*, whose lead track, “I’ve Been Starting to Love All the Things I Hate,” makes a case for pulling ourselves out of the collective malaise of 2020 to find our collective voice. In AlunaGeorge, her duo with producer George Reid, her soprano sometimes crosses into bubblegum-pop territory, but on “I’ve Been Starting” her determination and vigor set a different tone for the new album: “Sweet, sweet destiny / You’ll never be my enemy,” she sings. Born in England to parents with roots on multiple continents, Aluna Francis dropped out of art school in the early 2000s and settled in London, working as a reflexologist while making music with a series of bands. After she met Reid online in 2009, they formed AlunaGeorge and started creating R&B-infused dance tracks layered in pop gloss—and in 2015, they attracted international attention when a DJ Snake remix of their 2013 song “You Know You Like It” hit the *Billboard* Hot 100. Aluna is well-versed in collaboration, but on *Renaissance* she’s in full creative control for the first time. The album’s self-assured songs can be read as extensions of the powerful manifesto she posted on her Instagram account in June, an open letter to the dance-music community demanding more inclusivity and the abolition of racial inequities. *Renaissance* journeys through several genres Aluna loves, including dancehall (“Get Paid,” featuring Jada Kingdom and Princess Nokia) and house (“Body Pump”), and it adds up to a strong statement from an artist who knows how to claim her power.

—SALEM COLLO-JULIN

CAUSA SUI, *SZABODELICO*

El Paraíso

elparaísorecords.com/releases/causa-sui-szabodelico

When things got dark in 2020, some bands leaned into anxiety, loneliness, and rage, but others embraced silver linings—especially if COVID shutdowns allowed them a more relaxed pace of life that helped them refocus and pursue quieter personal interests that might otherwise get pushed to the back burner. And if there’s a musical equivalent to the pandemic home-baking movement, Causa Sui’s new *Szabodelico* would qualify. The Danish four-piece have spent the past 15 years blending heavy psych, desert rock, Krautrock, and more, but with *Szabodelico* they nod to the mix of jazz, pop, and folk developed by the album’s namesake, legendary Hungarian guitarist Gábor Szabó. Built on sessions from late 2019 and early 2020 and fleshed out and mixed this summer by guitarist Jonas Munk, these instrumental tracks conjure a variety of moods and atmospheres, but even when they skew haunting or pensive, they never turn despairing. Szabó’s influence can be felt throughout, including on the gold-hued “Gábor’s Path,” the loungey-turned-dreamy “Vibratone” (which shares its name with an innovative effects unit introduced by Fender in the late 60s), and the bold, rhythmic

title track. The warm instrumentals and airy production often make it feel like you’ve stepped into the band’s practice space, while the rich, shimmering “Lucien’s Beat” invites you to join them on a winding, cosmic adventure. Music that not only challenges the mind but also relieves stress-induced muscle tension without completely sidestepping reality is always welcome, but *Szabodelico* couldn’t have arrived at a better point in time. —JAMIE LUDWIG

DEZRON DOUGLAS & BRANDEE YOUNGER, *FORCE MAJEURE*

International Anthem

intlanthem.bandcamp.com/album/force-majeure

For the past few months, bassist Dezron Douglas and harpist Brandee Younger have dealt with the necessity of social distancing with their own kind of intimate gigs: a series of quietly uplifting performances streamed live through a shared microphone from their Manhattan apartment. *Force Majeure* collects a dozen of these songs along with brief, perceptive spoken-word asides that address cultural issues such as music’s role in the Black Lives Matter movement. Before the pandemic, Douglas and Younger worked in a wide array of contexts: They’ve both played with saxophonist Ravi Coltrane and on Makaya McCraven’s 2018 album *Universal Beings*. Douglas has led his Black Lion ensemble and also served as a sideman to such jazz legends as saxophonists Jackie McLean and Pharoah Sanders. Younger has led her own quartet, and her composition “Hortense” appeared in the 2019 Beyoncé documentary *Homecoming*. These experiences have given them a similarly diverse battery of resources, and the idiomatic juxtapositions in their repertoire blend them together lyrically. Younger’s glissandos combine with Douglas’s assertive rhythms to make the Sanders/Leon Thomas free-jazz spiritual “The Creator Has a Master Plan” fit in alongside the heft they bring to the cheery 1970s *Sesame Street* song “Sing” (which the Carpenters turned into a hit). While Younger channels the lead voices on the Jackson Five’s “Never Can Say Goodbye,” Douglas creates a fitting countermelody using a technique that nods to classic Motown bassists such as James Jamerson. They also upend the conventional roles of their instruments on Alice Coltrane’s “Gospel Trane,” as Younger turns propulsive to support Douglas’s lead. Their only original composition on the album, the closing “Toilet Paper Romance,” is an easygoing wordless conversation that evokes a couple sticking together through the minutiae of an ongoing crisis. —AARON COHEN

GUIDO GAMBOA, *A DROLL*

Pentiments

pentiments.org/catalog/pen008

For the past few years, Chicagoan Guido Gamboa has been one of the city’s best purveyors of experimental music, though too few people have noticed. He launched his record label, Pentiments, in December 2015 with the release of his

MUSIC



Dezron Douglas & Brandee Younger DENIKA PENISTON

debut solo album, *Saturday's Notes*, a collage of field recordings and electronics expertly arranged to render familiar sounds (car horns, camera shutters) enigmatic and beguiling. His second album, 2018 (*Regional Bears*), is more austere, and his new third LP, *A Droll* (Pentiments), further refines his sonic mischief. The record begins by placing the listener in the sonic equivalent of a dilapidated carnival—indistinct chatter and clanging accompanies warped but playful melodies. This abruptly changes to the sounds of strong wind and quiet tapping, which build into a massive, dense fog. As vivid as the moods may be, though, Gamboa doesn't overwhelm the listener so much as provoke unease and curiosity. That becomes more clear as the album progresses: a melange of animal noises and creaking metal conjures an off-putting queasiness, intensified soon thereafter by the unsettling sound of obviously forced laughter. *A Droll* continues down this path, sounding normal on the surface but increasingly cryptic and befuddling as you sit with it—listening to it feels like watching a horror film where suspiciously nice townspeople give off an ominous sense of wrongness by the light of day. Gamboa never descends into straight-up terror, though; he doesn't let the sun set and turn his village into a den of monsters. He knows it's more fun to simply tantalize. —JOSHUA MINSOO KIM

MOĞOLLAR, ANATOLIAN SUN

Night Dreamer

mogollar.bandcamp.com/album/anatolian-sun

In the late 90s and early 00s, a wave of indie reissues brought 70s psychedelic music that had been made all over the world to new generations of American fans. In Turkey, for instance, a regional style called “Anatolian rock” emerged in the late 60s when mind-blowing artists such as Erkin Koray, 3 Hürel, and Bunalım mixed traditional folk with full-tilt, electrified acid rock. The 1999 com-

pilation *Love, Peace & Poetry: Asian Psychedelic Music* introduced me to one of the other well-springs of this sound, the band Moğollar. On the transcendently beautiful “Katip Arzuhalim Yaz Yare Böyle,” they mix delay-treated *kamancheh* (also called a spike fiddle) with insistent hand percussion and gorgeous, spaced-out guitar (though I suppose it could be one of the other traditional stringed instruments they use, a *bağlama* or *tanbur*). This unearthly, soul-stirring song sounds like an early Pink Floyd instrumental that somehow arrived via the Middle East, and mark my words, it'll be played at my funeral. Moğollar (“Mongols” in Turkish) formed in 1967 with the lineup of Aziz Azmet, Murat Ses, Cahit Berkay, Hasan Sel, and Engin Yörükoğlu, and by 1971 they'd become so successful on the international stage that they won France's coveted Grand Prix du Disque. Moğollar's lineup changed a lot throughout the 70s—they had an especially hard time holding onto singers—but by the time they called it quits in 1976, the folks who'd stepped up to their mike included Turkish legends Barış Manço, Cem Karaca, and Selda Bağcan.

In 1993 multi-instrumentalist Cahit Berkay and drummer Engin Yörükoğlu (both original members) re-formed Moğollar with bassist and vocalist Taner Öngür (who'd played in the band from 1970 till '74) and keyboardist Serhat Ersöz. In 2007 vocalist and guitarist Emrah Karaca (son of Cem Karaca) joined in time for Moğollar's previous LP, 2009's *Umut Yolunu Bulur*. Yörükoğlu died from lung cancer in 2010, and the following year, the band added Kemal Küçükbakkal on drums. Their new double LP, *Anatolian Sun*, is part of the Direct-to-Disc series by British/Dutch label Night Dreamer, which has also included releases by Seu Jorge, Seun Kuti, and American sax legend Gary Bartz—Moğollar recorded it old-school in a two-day session in Haarlem's Artone Studio, cutting sides A and B on day one and sides C and D on day two. It consists of new versions of classics and deep cuts, and like most

BEER DELIVERY

PLACE YOUR ORDER FOR NEXT DAY BEER DELIVERY Today BIT.LY/GOOSEDELIVERS

Store

Shop the Reader

chicagoreader.com/store



Causa Sui © COURTESY EL PARAISO RECORDS

continued from 53

contemporary efforts by older bands, it has a modern sheen, in this case undoubtedly due to producer Murat Ertel (a member of danceable Turkish psych group Baba Zula). If you know Moğollar from J. Dilla's famous samples of "Haliç'te Güneşin Batışı" on his 2001 solo debut, *Welcome 2 Detroit*, you'll have no complaints with the new recording of the track: it still swings, with a warm, organic feel and proggy Hammond-organ ripples galore. The guitars, synths, and beats sound a bit crisper on *Anatolian Sun* than on the original versions of these songs, but the new album rocks with the same vintage fuzzy glory. And the 60s and 70s tunes are indistinguishable here from the reunion numbers, among them driving takes on 90s cuts "Bi' Şey Yapmalı" and "Dinleyiverin Gari." Moğollar show their gentler, more traditional side on lilting, acoustic tracks such as "Gam Yüğü" and "Buzlar Çözülmeden," and they especially shine on the intensely psychedelic closer, "Alageyik Destanı," originally released in 1972—its vibrating strings make the hairs on my neck stand on end, just like the first time I heard it 20 years ago. Bless Moğollar (and the folks at Night Dreamers) for keeping these illuminating Anatolian rock sounds alive. —STEVE KRAKOW

SNOOZE, STILL

Choke Artist
wearesnooze.bandcamp.com

Freewheeling Chicago band Snooze play math rock like they're trying to be inexplicable. They're fans of emo, metal, and prog, and though that's comfortably ordinary in this subgenre, I'd be hard-pressed to think of another such group who've opened an EP by segueing quickly from a distorted electronic hodgepodge reminiscent of footwork into a soothing polyrhythm (2017's *Actually, Extremely*) or who've prefaced a whimsical, whiplash-inducing romp with a honeyed a cappella melody ("Amicus Pawsterum," off 2019's *Familiaris*). Snooze's technical proficiency allows them to precisely execute bizarre musical blends in outre

time signatures at high speeds, but that's also comfortably ordinary in this subgenre—what makes the band stand out is how effectively they signal that their first priority is having fun.

That makes Snooze's excellent new EP, *Still* (Choke Artist), especially bittersweet. Long-time bassist Cameron Grom died in March at age 28, after spending the past two years soldiering through health problems that left him unable to work and pushed his body to its limits. He went semi-public with his illness in October 2019, when he launched a GoFundMe to cover the cost of two major surgeries. Snooze are now down to just one full-time member, guitarist-vocalist Logan Voss, who recorded the lion's share of *Still*. He found a key collaborator in session drummer Anup Sastry, whose fastidious playing complements the band's tightly engineered drive. As per usual for Snooze, *Still* never lingers on a definable mood for long, which benefits its emotionally complicated material. Grom wrote the straightforward, harrowing lyrics to "Feels Bad" after a hospital scare, and the sliver of warmth that alto saxophonist Lucia Sarmiento hurls against the tide of chugging riffs at the song's climax feels like hope slicing through a sea of grief. Voss plans to use the proceeds from *Still* to adopt a tree in Grom's memory in Grayslake's Central Park, not far from where Grom lived in north suburban Round Lake Beach. —LEOR GALIL

SOUR, SOUR

Self-released
sourthrash.bandcamp.com/album/sour

If you blindfolded me and played me the self-titled debut from Aurora thrash band Sour, I'd totally believe it'd been recorded in 1984 with a cassette four-track in a dusty garage. They recall thrash metal's glory days with guitar shredding that makes you want to skateboard off your roof, drumming that erupts with cascades of cymbal crashes, and vocals that fight through the non-stop din as little more than half-swallowed grunts. The band dropped *Sour* just last month, though,



Mars Williams © PETER GANNUSHKIN

and when you listen closely you can tell the album has a contemporary point of view—it's most obvious on "Truth Be Told," which opens by sampling Timothy Burke's 2018 montage of Sinclair Media TV news affiliates all parroting the same piece of company-provided right-wing propaganda (which should clue you in about the song's subject matter). Guitarist-vocalist Danny Schwartz, drummer-vocalist Juanangel Perez, and bassist Jake Velez (who left the band in January, after finishing recording) show a lot of promise on this full-length, which takes aim at the the status quo's rotting core with every dingy, restless ripper. Even Sour's most slapdash turns—the vocals on "Eve of Your End" sound like they're racing to catch up with the song—have a bruised charm. —LEOR GALIL

MARS WILLIAMS PRESENTS AN AYLER XMAS VOL. 4: CHICAGO VS N.Y.C.

Astral Spirits
marsaylerxmas.bandcamp.com/album/mars-williams-presents-an-ayler-xmas-vol-4-chicago-vs-nyc

Among the myriad injuries inflicted upon Americans by COVID-19 (though admittedly one of the mildest) is the impossibility of attending your favorite holiday concert. For the past dozen years, Chicago-based saxophonist Mars Williams has hosted a unique variation on that seasonal tradition. Each December he convenes Witches & Devils, his combo devoted to the music of saxophonist Albert Ayler (1936-1970), to play a set or two of ecstatic, free-jazz-style medleys that combine spiritually infused Ayler themes (among them "Bells," "Universal Indians," and "Truth Is Marching In") with holiday favorites (including "12 Days of Christmas," "Angels We Have Heard on High," and "Ma'oz Tzur," aka the Hanukkah hymn sometimes called "Rock of Ages"). The ensemble will perform this year too, but rather than sharing a room with a live audience they'll livestream from the otherwise empty Constellation on December 18 and 19. Since 2016, Williams has also spread the holi-

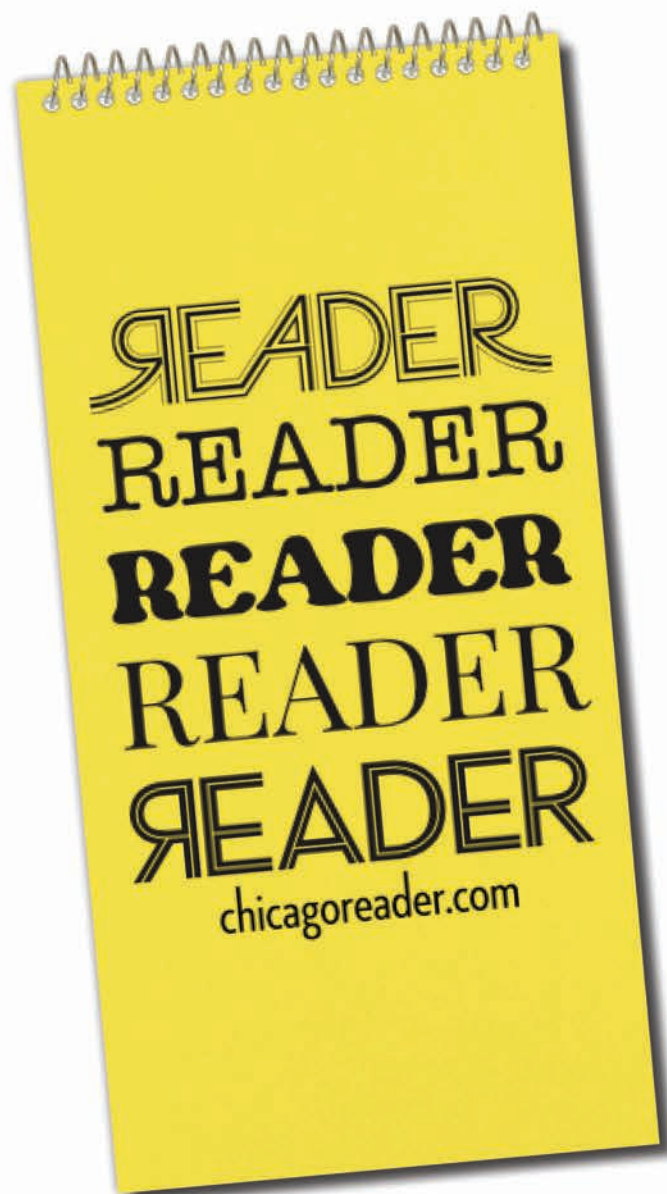
day joy beyond Chicago by taking the Ayler Xmas songbook on the road, working up its material with like-minded local musicians in New Orleans, on the eastern seaboard, and in Europe. And since 2017, he has released albums culled from these concerts. The first two were recorded in Chicago, and the third was made in Poland with a mostly European band that also featured formerly Chicago-based trumpeter Jaimie Branch. *An Ayler Xmas Vol. 4: Chicago vs N.Y.C.* pits an augmented version of Witches & Devils recorded in December 2019 at the Hungry Brain against a band that performed at New York's DiMenna Center for Classical Music six days later.

The usual fellow travelers in the Chicago group (who also play with Williams in Extraordinary Popular Delusions and the NRG Ensemble) were joined by violinist Peter Maunu, cellist Katinka Kleijn, and baritone saxophonist Keefe Jackson, which enabled them to persuasively re-create the combination of keening horns, writhing strings, and manic march rhythms heard on the immortal *Albert Ayler in Greenwich Village*. The ensemble's sheer size, combined with the core players' familiarity with the project's method—which often involves band members spontaneously calling out Christmas melodies to derail an Ayler tune—results in exceptionally fluid transitions and nearly overwhelming emotional intensity. The New York musicians, on the other hand, were relative newcomers to the concept—with the exception of cellist Fred Lonberg-Holm, who was a member of Witches & Devils for years before moving to upstate Kingston. This may explain the looser feeling of their set, which links the tunes with generous passages of rambunctious free improvisation. Moments of near chaos—at one point trombonist Steve Swell chases after Williams like a guard dog trying to scare off a trespassing reindeer—balance gentler interludes, including a section where Lonberg-Holm and guitarist Nels Cline seem to be singing the aforementioned guard dog to sleep. But the distance they travel away from recognizable themes only makes it more exciting when they break into the next one.

—BILL MEYER

Chicago Reader Reporter's Notebook

The perfect notebook for when you want to keep things *on the record*.



\$12 (shipping included)
chicagoreader.com/store

Stay connected...and learn online!



Our online group classes for all skill levels
are forming now. Sign up today at

oldtownschool.org

 **Old Town School
of Folk Music**

MUSIC AND DANCE
CLASSES FOR ALL AGES

SHARE MUSIC!

BUY GIFT
CERTIFICATES



 **Old
Town
School
of Folk
Music**

Old Town School gift certificates make perfect
holiday gifts! Learn more and purchase online at

ots.fm/holidays

EARLY WARNINGS

CHICAGO SHOWS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT IN THE WEEKS TO COME

ALL AGES FREE



Enrique Mazzola © JEAN-BAPTISTE MILLOT

NEW

Alyssa Allgood Holiday Band presents A Holiday Christmas Concert 12/12, 8 PM, livestream at [youtube.com/FultonStreetCollective](https://www.youtube.com/FultonStreetCollective)

Amazarashi 12/19, 8 PM, livestream at [livefrom.events](https://www.livefrom.events)

Andrew Sa's Lonesome Holiday featuring Andrew Sa, Waltzer, Ohmme, Liam Kazar, Daniel Knox, Hawk Colman, Kelly Hogan, Wes Perry, Dylan Matracia, VV. Lightbody & Sam Cantor, Parker Callahan, and more 12/22, 8 PM, livestream at [noonchorus.com/hideout](https://www.noonchorus.com/hideout)

Ariel Quartet Hanukkah concert and bake-off 12/13, 3 PM, livestream at [ourconcerts.live/hanukkah](https://www.ourconcerts.live/hanukkah)

Artist talk for The Roedelius Cells featuring Tim Story and Hans-Joachim Roedelius 12/13, 2 PM, livestream at [ess.org](https://www.ess.org)

Badflower and friends 12/13, 2 PM, livestream at [badflower.veeps.com](https://www.badflower.veeps.com)

Daniel Baer 12/13, 4 PM, livestream at [pianofortechicago.com](https://www.pianofortechicago.com)

Betty presents Stuck at Home for the Holidays 12/18, 7 PM, livestream at [citywinery.com](https://www.citywinery.com)

Geof Bradfield Trio & Karen Parisian 12/20, 8 PM, livestream at [youtube.com/FultonStreetCollective](https://www.youtube.com/FultonStreetCollective)

Breaking Down the Score: Attila with Maestro Enrique Mazzola 12/10 and 12/17, 2 PM, livestream at [youtube.com/lyricoperachicago](https://www.youtube.com/lyricoperachicago)

Bush Tetras 1/23/2021, 8 PM, livestream at [lpr.tv](https://www.lpr.tv)

Cape Town Opera 4/29/2022-4/30/2022, 7:30 PM, Harris Theater

Kenny Chesney, Florida Georgia Line, Old Dominion, Michael Franti & Spearhead 6/26/2021, 5 PM, United Center

Christmas Chestnuts to Cherish featuring International Chamber Artists 12/19, 7:30 PM, livestream at [icamusic.org](https://www.icamusic.org)

CIVLization episode three 12/11, 8 PM, livestream at [youtube.com/audiotreetv](https://www.youtube.com/audiotreetv)

Bootsy Collins 12/11, 8 PM, livestream at [stageit.com/bootsy_collins](https://www.stageit.com/bootsy_collins)

Dan & Shay, Ingrid Andress, Band Camino 10/2/2021, 7 PM, United Center

David Dove: Static Tour featuring David Dove, Ryan Edwards, Ayanna Jolivet McCloud, Stalina Villarreal, Justin Jones, Tom Carter, Rachel Hulsey, Sonia Flores, Roberto Tejada, Jawwaad Taylor, and more 12/12, 2 PM, livestream at [ess.org](https://www.ess.org)

Daybreaker Live presents Tis the Season to Dance featuring Dionne Warwick, O'Jays 12/19, 10 AM, livestream at [daybreaker.com/city/live](https://www.daybreaker.com/city/live)

Jon Deitemyer Quartet 12/10, 8 PM, livestream at [youtube.com/fultonstreetcollective](https://www.youtube.com/fultonstreetcollective)

Andrew Distel Trio 12/21, 8 PM, livestream at [youtube.com/fultonstreetcollective](https://www.youtube.com/fultonstreetcollective)

Django Experiment (Stephane Wrembel, Thor Jensen, Ari Folman Cohen, Nick Anderson) with Nick Driscoll 12/19, 2 PM, livestream at [thirdrow.live](https://www.thirdrow.live)

Hamid Drake & Michael Zerang's 30th annual Winter Solstice Concerts 12/21, 6:30 AM and 8 PM, livestream at [linkshall.org](https://www.linkshall.org)

The Dreamscape featuring Sadie Woods, Damon Locks, and more 1/16/2021, 2 PM, livestream at [mcchicago.org](https://www.mcchicago.org)

Emmet Otter's Jug-Band Christmas, Adventure Sandwich 12/12, 5 PM, livestream at [noonchorus.com/hideout](https://www.noonchorus.com/hideout)

FitzGerald's 12 Streams of Christmas present Naomi & Ron's Christmas Special featuring Naomi Ashley, Ron Lazzeretti, Ike Reilly, Dag Juhlin, Famous Brothers, Cheryl Tomblin, Cayne Collier, and more 12/17, 8 PM, livestream at [fitzgeraldsnightclub.com](https://www.fitzgeraldsnightclub.com)

Robbie Fulks 12/20, 8 PM, livestream at [noonchorus.com/hideout](https://www.noonchorus.com/hideout)

HOLO presents Place of Assembly episode VII featuring Hybrida Collective 12/14, 6 PM, livestream at [ess.org](https://www.ess.org)

Holiday Cheer with Loudon Wainwright III (solo) 12/12, 7 PM, livestream at [citywinery.com](https://www.citywinery.com)

A Holiday Concert with Alfreda Burke & Rodrick Dixon featuring the Jo Ann Daugherty Trio 12/31, 7 PM, livestream at [stellartickets.com/events](https://www.stellartickets.com/events)

How the Grinch Stole 2020: a Holiday Concert with Bailen 12/19, 8 PM, livestream at [lpr.tv](https://www.lpr.tv)

Elton John 2/4/2022-2/5/2022, 8 PM, United Center

Wynonna Judd 12/12, 6:30 PM, livestream at [citywinery.com](https://www.citywinery.com)

Julian's 2020 New Year's Eve House Party at the Drive-In featuring Stevie B, Angel, Bad Boy Bill, Hula, Joe Smooth, and more 12/31, 8 PM, Chicago Drive-In Bridgeview, Bridgeview

Live, Rosemont
Less Than Jake 12/11, 5 PM, livestream at [livefrom.events](https://www.livefrom.events)

Let There Be Light: A benefit concert for the Lake County Folk Club featuring David HB Drake 12/20, 7 PM, livestream at [lakecountyyfolkclub.org](https://www.lakecountyyfolkclub.org)

Living Dead Girl's Virtual Christmas Show 12/12, 7 PM, livestream at [livingdeadgirl.ca](https://www.livingdeadgirl.ca)

LP's Happy Hour featuring Andrea Jablonski, Steve Walters 12/11, 5 PM, livestream at [noonchorus.com/hideout](https://www.noonchorus.com/hideout)

Nduduzo Makhathini 12/13, 2 PM, livestream at [stageit.com/soda_studio](https://www.stageit.com/soda_studio)

Jon McLaughlin 12/21, 7 PM, livestream at [citywinery.com](https://www.citywinery.com)

JD McPherson 12/12, 3 PM, livestream at [jdmcperson.veeps.com](https://www.jdmcperson.veeps.com)

Pat Travers Band 12/12, 8 PM, livestream at [pattravers.veeps.com](https://www.pattravers.veeps.com)

Kamau Amu Patton, Darius Jones, Beautifulsh, Luke Stewart 12/10, 6:30 PM, livestream at [ess.org](https://www.ess.org)

Peace 2020: For the Fallen featuring Kuang Hao Huang & Steve Roberts, Stephen Burns, Angel Bat Dawid & Sistazz of the Nitty Gritty, and more 12/10, 2 PM, livestream at [fulcrumpoint.org](https://www.fulcrumpoint.org)

Peace Through Music featuring Aloe Blacc, Angélique Kidjo, Annie Lennox, Becky G, Brandi Carlile & Mike McCready, Carlos Santana, Gary Clark Jr., Keith Richards, and more 12/10, 2 PM, livestream at [youtube.com/c/playingchange](https://www.youtube.com/c/playingchange)

Rammstein 9/1/2021, 7 PM, United Center

Gilberto Santa Rosa 10/21/2021, 8 PM, Copernicus Center

Slackers 12/19, 6:45 PM, livestream at [livefrom.events](https://www.livefrom.events)

Sunflower Bean 1/7/2021, 8 PM, livestream at [lpr.tv](https://www.lpr.tv)

Sweet Honey in the Rock present Celebrating the Holy Days 12/12, 2 PM, livestream at [thirdrow.live](https://www.thirdrow.live)

Tasha 12/18, 6 PM, livestream at [facebook.com/mcchicago](https://www.facebook.com/mcchicago)

Tone Glow presents Shots, Derek Baron, Able Noise, Daphne X, and host Andrew McKenzie 12/19, 2 PM, livestream at [ess.org](https://www.ess.org)

Vanishing Twin 1/20/2021, 2 PM, livestream at [noonchorus.com](https://www.noonchorus.com)

Phil Vassar, Lexie Hayden 7/16/2021, 8 PM, Joe's Live, Rosemont

VetsAid 2020: Home for the Holidays featuring Jon Bon Jovi, Melissa Etheridge, Mary Gauthier, Vince Gill,

Never miss a show again. Sign up for the newsletter at chicagoreader.com/early

Josh Ritter, Alice Cooper, Eddie Vedder, Kenny "Babyface" Edmonds, and more 12/12, 5 PM, livestream at [vetsaid.veeps.com](https://www.vetsaid.veeps.com)

Weishfest at Home featuring Old Dominion, Dispatch, Walker Hayes, Canaan Smith, and more 12/11, 8 PM, livestream at [weishfest.com](https://www.weishfest.com)

Chris White Trio perform A Charlie Brown Christmas 12/13, 7 PM, livestream hosted by Lincoln Park Zoo's Cafe Brauer; access provided with ticket purchase

UPDATED

Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center 12/17, 7:30 PM, livestream at [harristheater-chicago.org](https://www.harristheater-chicago.org); stream available through Mon 12/21

Emily Blue, Marielle Kraft 1/8/2021, 7 PM, Chop Shop, canceled

Fratellis 1/22/2021, 8 PM, Metro, canceled

David Ryan Harris 3/15/2021, 6 PM, Uncommon Ground on Devon, canceled

Holy Fuck 3/19/2021, 9 PM, Lincoln Hall, canceled

Gordon Lightfoot 7/18/2021, 8 PM, Copernicus Center, rescheduled; tickets purchased for previously scheduled shows will be honored

Stephen Malkmus, Qais Essar & the Magik Carpet 3/4/2021, 8:30 PM, Thalia Hall, canceled

Michael McDermott 12/16-12/17, 7:30 PM; 12/18-12/20, 8 PM, City Winery, canceled

Silverstein 11/9/2021, 6 PM, Concord Music Hall, rescheduled, 17+

UPCOMING

AJR 12/26, 7 PM, livestream at [universe.com](https://www.universe.com)

Jimmie Allen 12/17, 8 PM, livestream at [ryman-shop.mandolin.com](https://www.ryman-shop.mandolin.com)

John Doe 12/16, 8 PM, livestream at [mandolin.com](https://www.mandolin.com)

FitzGerald's 12 Streams of Christmas presents the Western Elstons 12/15, 8 PM, livestream at [facebook.com/fitzgeraldsnightclub](https://www.facebook.com/fitzgeraldsnightclub)

Meat Wave 12/17, 8 PM, livestream at [audiotree.tv](https://www.audiotree.tv)

Molly Tuttle 12/17, 7 PM, livestream at [mandolin.com](https://www.mandolin.com)



GOSSIP WOLF

A furry ear to the ground of the local music scene

LATE LAST MONTH, Chicago rapper and teaching artist **Matt Muse** launched the second annual **Love & Nappyness Hair Care Drive**. Muse and his volunteer team are collecting hair- and skin-care products for Chicagoans in need—shampoo, conditioner, moisturizer, aftershave, soap, deodorant, individually packaged razors, and the like. Last year, the drive distributed more than 500 items, and Muse hopes to double that this year. The six drop-off locations include both **Trap House Chicago** stores and the **Silver Room**, and you can donate money via Cash App (\$MattMuse12), Venmo (@MattMuse12), or PayPal (MattMuseMGMT@gmail.com). The last day to give is Friday, December 18.

Self-described “abolitionist mutual aid project” **Chicago Community Jail Support** kicked off in May 2020 after the mass arrest of Black Lives Matter protesters, and the all-volunteer group still maintains a tent outside Cook County Jail to provide snacks, first aid, phone calls, and other help for the recently incarcerated, including rides home or emergency shelter. As the winter gets nastier, the organization hopes to buy a van to make it easier to keep up its work. Last Friday, a slew of local Gossip Wolf faves, including **Ohmme**, **Half Gringa**, **Ratboys**, **Into It. Over It.**, and **Angel Bat Dawid** contributed to a 46-track benefit compilation for CCJS called **Warm Violet**. Both pressings of its double cassette edition sold out fairly quickly, but you can still buy a digital copy on the CCSJ Bandcamp page.

Kara Jackson served as Chicago youth poet laureate and national youth poet laureate in 2019, and Gossip Wolf has been hyped on her music since she dropped the EP **A Song for Every Chamber of the Heart** later that year—her striking acoustic guitar melodies and tender singing go straight for the gut. Last week, Jackson released **Xmas Demos**, a three-song EP of warmhearted holiday songs that celebrate the season while avoiding its clichés. —J.R. NELSON AND LEOR GALIL

Got a tip? Tweet @Gossip_Wolf or e-mail gossipwolf@chicagoreader.com.

The *Chicago Reader* is community-centered
and community-supported.

READER

KEEP THE PRESSES ROLLING

You are at the heart of this newspaper. Founded in 1971, we have always been free, and have always centered Chicago. Help us to continue to curate coverage of the diverse and creative communities of this fabulous city.

Your donation keeps the presses rolling.

CHIP IN HERE:

www.chicagoreader.com/members



WANT TO DONATE VIA CHECK? Make checks payable to “Chicago Reader” and mail to Chicago Reader, Suite 102, 2930 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60616. Include your mailing address, phone, and email—and please indicate if you are okay with us thanking you by name in the paper.

CHICAGO READER IS PROUD TO PARTNER WITH THESE INDEPENDENT BOOKSTORES!



**Book Club members receive an
additional 10% off
at the following stores:**



The Book Cellar | 4736 N. Lincoln 60625
773-293-2665 | bookcellarinc.com

Bookie's | 10324 S. Western 60643
312-890-3860 | bookiesbookstores.com

Bucket O'Blood Books and Records | 3182 N. Elston 60618
312-890-3860 | bucketoblood.com

The Dial Bookshop | 410 S. Michigan, 2nd Floor 60605
dialbookshop.com

Madison Street Books | 1127 W. Madison 60607
312-929-4140 | madstreetbooks.com

Pilsen Community Books | 1102 W. 18th St. 60608
312-478-9434 | pilsencommunitybooks.com

Roscoe Books | 2142 W. Roscoe 60618
773-857-2676 | roscoebooks.com

Semicolon | 515 N. Halsted 60642
312-877-5170 | semicolonchi.com

Seminary Co-Op Bookstore | 5751 S. Woodlawn 60637
773-752-4381 | semcoop.com

Volumes Bookcafe | 1474 N. Milwaukee 60622
773-697-8066 | volumesbooks.com

Women & Children First | 5233 N. Clark 60640
773-769-9299 | womenandchildrenfirst.com

*This yearlong partnership with
independent bookstores is supported
by the Poetry Foundation.*

Poetry Foundation | 61 West Superior Street | poetryfoundation.org



CHICAGO READER SOMMELIER SERIES

WRITTEN BY JENNA RIMENSNYDER



CASSIE SAKAI
Goat Group Wine Director

Born and raised in the Bay Area, Cassie Sakai grew up experiencing wine culture through the eyes of her food- and wine-loving family. After college, Sakai moved to Chicago and quickly fell in love with the city. It wasn't long before Sakai made her way to Girl & the Goat, a Fulton Market hotspot, where she's remained for the last five years.

Beginning her journey with the restaurant as a server, Sakai realized that becoming a sommelier seemed like the most logical and sustainable next step in her career within the service industry. Even at the age of 22, Sakai knew that working with wine is something she could do for the rest of her life. Utilizing the building blocks in place from her serving experience alongside her passion for hospitality, Sakai worked her way up the ranks to becoming the Wine Director for the Goat Group.

Sakai's wine pairings are as eclectic as the restaurant's menu, crafted from the mind of renowned chef Stephanie Izard. The sommelier considers herself lucky to host adventurous guests who are open to unique dishes accompanied by nontraditional sips to capture the full experience of what Girl & the Goat has to offer.

Sakai attributes a large part of her growth and development as a sommelier to the community of female professionals in the field that embraced her when she first arrived on the scene. Over the years, Sakai has added to her toolbox, acquiring a wealth of knowledge for guests and green sommeliers alike to tap for tasting gems.



ADAM SWEDERS
DineAmic Group Wine Director

Boasting a decade of experience in the service industry, Adam Sweders's reach as a sommelier has extended far beyond the wine cellar. From navigating the fine dining scene in Chicago to receiving national recognition for his endeavors, Sweders finds himself breathing new life into the wine industry one project at a time.

Not long after receiving his certification, Sweders landed the coveted role of Head Sommelier at Joe's Seafood, Prime Steak & Stone Crab. After 18 months of running the wine program at Joe's, what he refers to as acquiring his Ph.D. in the industry, Sweders found himself linked up with DineAmic Group founders Lucas Stoioff and David Rekhso. Within a year, Sweders went from running the wine program at DineAmic's Prime & Provisions to becoming the Corporate Wine Director for all seven of the group's restaurants, creating, revamping, and curating each location's collection.

Arguably Sweders's most impressive creation is Wine Rival, formerly known as Somm Madness. Sweders dreamt up the blind tasting tournament while on vacation in 2017 watching March Madness and drinking a glass of wine. Sommeliers alongside wine enthusiasts gather from all over the nation to compete for a grand prize. Over the years, the annual event has gained national recognition and quite the cult following, beckoning hundreds of spectators to watch as the one-of-a-kind wine tournament unfolds, going from 64 contestants to the final four before crowning the Wine Rival champion.

If his resume isn't impressive enough, Sweders has a few more creative projects in his bag of tricks that will soon be announced. Until then, he'll be busy running the wine program for DineAmic Group and dreaming up his next big idea.

*This Sommelier Series
is supported by
The Foley Food & Wine Society*



Foley Food and Wine Society | 10300 Chalk Hill Road, Healdsburg, CA 95448 | foleyfoodandwinesociety.com

The Chicago Reader BOOK CLUB

Mikki Kendall

*Hood Feminism:
Notes From the
Women That a
Movement Forgot*

Book Club Month:

October 20

Author Talk:

10/22/2020

Sonali Dev

*Recipe for
Persuasion*

November 20

11/19/2020

Riva Lehrer

Golem Girl

December 20

12/17/2020

Emil Ferris

*My Favorite
Thing Is Monsters*

January 21

1/28/2021

Eve Ewing

1919

February 21

2/25/2021

Nnedi Okorafor

Remote Control

March 21

3/25/2021

Natalie Moore

The South Side

April 21

4/22/2021

Rebecca Makkai

*The Great
Believers*

May 21

5/27/2021

Fatimah Asghar

*If They Come for
Us*

June 21

6/24/2021

Kayla Ancrum

Darling

July 21

7/22/2021

Jessica Hopper

(TBD)

August 21

8/26/2021

Precious Brady-Davis

*I Have Always
Been Me: A
Memoir*

September 21

9/23/2021

**Book Club
membership
includes:**

Exclusive
access to
conversations
between
Authors and
the Reader

Discounts to
your favorite
independent
bookstores

A curated
monthly
newsletter

A members-
only
discussion
forum

Special offers
from Reader
partners



Book Club Month

December 20

Author Talk

12/17/2020



Riva Lehrer
Author

Riva Lehrer is an artist, writer, and curator whose work focuses on issues of physical identity and the socially challenged body. She is best known for representations of people with impairments, and those whose sexuality or gender identity have long been stigmatized. A longtime faculty member of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Riva is currently an instructor in medical humanities at Northwestern University.



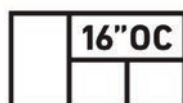
Heidi Stevens
Moderator

Heidi Stevens writes a daily column for the Chicago Tribune, where she has worked since 1998. Her nationally syndicated columns reach more than a million print and online readers each day, appearing in newspapers across the country. She's a frequent guest on local and national TV and radio stations, where she's called upon to discuss current events, pop culture, and issues around gender, race, and relationships. Heidi was awarded the Anne Keegan Award for Distinguished Journalism in 2018 by the Chicago Headline Club, the nation's largest chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists.

She earned a journalism degree from Eastern Illinois University in 1996 and lives in Chicago's Logan Square neighborhood with her husband and kids.

Presented by:

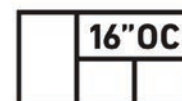
THE-FOLEY--
FOOD--WINE
SOCIETY ☯ -



Learn more at chicagoreader.com/bookclub

Presented by:

THE-FOLEY--
FOOD--WINE
SOCIETY ☯ -





JOE NEWTON

SAVAGE LOVE

Fact-checking the casserole's 'secret ingredient'

Some letters you suspect are fake and some letters you hope are fake.

By **DAN SAVAGE**

Q: Something is bothering me and I don't know where else to turn. I'm a bisexual man. I've been married to a great guy for the past six years. Despite COVID we gathered safely for an outdoors Thanksgiving dinner with my family. My mom, my brother and sister-in-law, and my adult nieces and nephews and their partners were there. Each household contributed to the feast and we had a wonderful evening. While my husband and I were snuggling in bed later he said that my casserole was a big hit thanks to the "secret ingredient." When I asked what he meant, he informed me that he had deposited my come from a blow job he'd given me earlier that day in my half-finished casserole. When I asked why he did this, he said he thought it was hot and he was aroused watching my family ingest it. To me, this seems a bit twisted and feels like a deeply disrespectful act toward my family. Now I cannot sleep and it is impossible for me to think of anything else. I wish he had never told me. I am writing to you as I don't know where else to turn. **—CONFUSED AND SHUDDERING SLEEPLESSLY, ENTIRELY REVOLTED OVER LOADED ENTRÉE**

A: Some letters you suspect are fake, some letters you know are fake, and some letters you hope are fake. I wish I could say this letter fell into the second category—a letter I knew to be fake—but I once got a letter from a man who would excuse himself at dinner parties, quickly rub one out in the bathroom, and then

dip the bristles of his hosts' toothbrushes in his semen. (That was 20 years ago and I still secure my toothbrush in a secret, undisclosed location whenever we have company.) So as much as I wished we lived in a world where something like this could never happen, CASSEROLE, we sadly don't live in that world.

That said . . . some details don't add up. I've been in the receiving end of plenty of blow jobs in my time, CASSEROLE, and there are tells when a guy doesn't swallow. A man who's holding your load in his mouth has a certain look; his mouth and jaw are set in a particular and revealing way. There's also no post blow job kissing or snuggling. And if you were to say, "Thank you, that was great," and they hummed back, "Mmm-hmm," instead of saying, "You're welcome," you would immediately know the guy didn't swallow. And yet you would have us believe that your husband somehow gave you a blow job and somehow didn't swallow your load without you noticing and then . . . what? He strolled around the house with a mouth full of come until the opportunity to defile your casserole presented itself?

Then again . . . impromptu blow jobs sometimes happen, CASSEROLE, and they sometimes happen in kitchens. So I suppose it's possible your husband interrupted you while you were making a casserole and then quickly leaned over and spat your load into your casserole and managed to give it a quick stir . . . without you noticing the spit or the stir? Sounds

improbable . . . but I suppose your husband could have created a diversion that took your attention off him and that mouthful of come and your casserole long enough to execute the spit-and-stir maneuver undetected. Perhaps he pointed at something outside the window or tossed a flash-bang grenade into the dining room.

But even if he did all of this—blew you, didn't swallow, created a diversion, spat your semen into a casserole you planned to share with your entire family—would he tell you about it? The guy who was glazing his friend's toothbrushes didn't brag to his friends about it. He wrote to me about it, described it as a compulsion, and asked me how to stop. That your husband would be so clueless as to think you wouldn't be revolted and upset by this is, if you'll forgive me, a little hard to swallow. Still . . . your nieces and nephews are adults . . . so it's possible you and your husband are getting up there in years . . . and he could be suffering from early-onset dementia; inappropriate sexual behavior and poor impulse control can be early symptoms.

So on the off, off, off chance this actually happened, CASSEROLE, here's my advice: If your husband spat your load into a half-finished casserole and then watched your whole family consume it and then assumed you would think it was hot, CASSEROLE, then you absolutely, positively need to divorce him. Let us count the ways you can't trust this man: you can't trust him with your semen, you can't trust him not to feed your come to your mother, you can't trust him around your siblings and nieces and nephews. You can't even leave him in the company of an unaccompanied casserole. So unless you looked into his eyes on your wedding day and thought, "This is a guy who would feed a woman her own son's semen and I'm fine with that," your husband isn't the "great guy" you thought he was. He's a monster and what he did unforgivable, even criminal. *Divorce the asserole.* You might want to consider calling the cops and pressing charges for sexual assault—here's hoping you saved some of the casserole for DNA testing—but you'll have to weigh involving the police against burdening your mother with the knowledge of your Thanksgiving casserole's secret ingredient.

P.S. A casserole is really more of a side dish at Thanksgiving, isn't it?

Q: Forgive my English. I write from Italy. I'm a quarter of a century old and I have been with my girlfriend for seven years. I can't tell you

how long the "sex high" lasted—the time when she wanted to have sex as often as possible—but it was maybe three years. Now if she's stressed, if we are not in a bed, if she hasn't just shaved her legs, if she's just woke up, if she's nervous for any reason at all, she doesn't want to have sex. I'm not one of those men who thinks exclusively about his own pleasure. I have asked her if she has any fantasies. She does not. I have asked her if I should be doing anything different. She says not. She doesn't masturbate, she doesn't watch porn. I purchased a sex toy for us. She will not touch it. And when I try to talk to her, she says that her sexuality is none of my business. I am miserable. I don't know what to do. She says I am "fixated on sex" and that there is more to life than that. I jerk off a lot, of course, which she only just started to accept. At first she considered it equivalent to cheating. Is it wrong to end a relationship of seven years because of a matter of different views on sex? I love her so much and leaving would be hard. Please help me. **—WHO HAS YEARNINGS**

A: Forgive my bluntness: Either your girlfriend never liked sex all that much or, after seven years, she's no longer excited by sex with you. If she were willing to talk about it, WHY, you might be able to do something about it; you might be able to revive your sex life by trying new things together, experimenting with toys, having adventures. But she's made it clear she's not interested in discussing things, much less doing things. And while she doesn't think her sexuality is any of your business, she clearly sees your sexuality as her business, e.g. until recently she thought you were cheating on her when you jerked off . . . which is kind of nuts, considering how infrequently she wants to fuck you.

There's nothing wrong with ending a sexual exclusive relationship when the sex doesn't work and your partner couldn't care less that you're unhappy and only grudgingly allows you to masturbate. As much as you love her, it's not working and it's only going to get worse. Eventually you'll cheat on her out of sheer desperation and the breakup won't just be painful, WHY, it will be messy and painful and you'll be cast as the bad guy. Don't wait for your dick to slam itself down on the self-destruct button. End it now.

P.S. Your English is so much better than my Italian! **✉**

Send letters to mail@savagelove.net. Download the *Savage Lovecast* at savagelovecast.com.
@fakedansavage

Men's Virility Restored in Clinical Trial; 275% More Blood Flow in 5 Minutes

A newly improved version of America's best-selling male performance enhancer gives 70-year-old men the ability and stamina they enjoyed in their 30's.

America's best-selling sexual performance enhancer just got a lot better.

It's the latest breakthrough for nitric oxide – the molecule that makes E.D. woes fade and restores virility when it counts the most.

Nitric oxide won the Nobel Prize in 1998. It's why "the little blue pill" works. More than 200,000 studies confirm it's the key to superior sexual performance.

And this new discovery increases nitric oxide availability resulting in even quicker, stronger and longer-lasting performance.

One double-blind, placebo-controlled study (the "gold-standard" of research) involved a group of 70-year-old-men.

They didn't exercise. They didn't eat healthy. And researchers reported their "nitric oxide availability was almost totally compromised," resulting in blood flow less than HALF of a man in peak sexual health.

But only five minutes after the first dose their blood flow increased 275%, back to levels of a perfectly healthy 31-year-old man! "It's amazing," remarks nitric oxide expert Dr. Al Sears. "That's like giving 70-year-old men the sexual power of 30-year-olds."

WHY SO MUCH EXCITEMENT?

Despite the billions men spend annually on older nitric oxide therapies, there's one well-known problem with them.

They don't always work.

A very distinguished and awarded doctor practicing at a prestigious Massachusetts hospital who has studied Nitric Oxide for over 43 years states a "deficiency of bioactive nitric oxide... leads to impaired endothelium-dependent vasorelaxation."

In plain English, these older products may increase levels of nitric oxide. But that's only half the battle. If it's not bioactively available then your body can't absorb it to produce an erection.

Experts simply call it the nitric oxide "glitch." And until now, there's never been a solution.

NEXT GENERATION NITRIC OXIDE FORMULA FLYING OFF SHELVES

Upon further research, America's No. 1 men's health expert Dr. Al Sears discovered certain nutrients fix this "glitch" resulting in 275% better blood flow.

He's combined those nutrients with proven nitric oxide

boosters in a new formula called *Primal Max Red*. In clinical trials, 5,000 mg is required for satisfying sexual performance. *Primal Max Red* contains a bigger, 9,000 mg per serving dose. It's become so popular, he's having trouble keeping it in stock.

Dr. Sears is the author of more than 500 scientific papers. Thousands of people listened to him speak at the recent Palm Beach Health & Wellness Festival featuring Dr. Oz. NFL Hall of Fame quarterback Joe Namath recently visited his clinic, the **Sears Institute for Anti-Aging Medicine**.

Primal Max Red has only been available for a few months — but everyone who takes it reports a big difference. "I have the energy to have sex three times in one day, WOW! That has not happened in years. Oh, by the way I am 62," says Jonathan K. from Birmingham, AL.

HOW IT WORKS

Loss of erection power starts with your blood vessels. Specifically, the inside layer called the endothelium where nitric oxide is made.

The problem is various factors THICKEN your blood vessels as you age. This blocks availability causing the nitric oxide "glitch." The result is difficulty in getting and sustaining a healthy erection.

How bad is the problem?

Researcher shows the typical 40-year-old man absorbs 50% less nitric oxide. At 50, that drops to 25%. And once you pass 60 just a measly 15% gets through.

To make matters worse, nitric oxide levels start declining in your 30's. And by 70, nitric oxide production is down an alarming 75%.

Primal Max Red is the first formula to tackle both problems. Combining powerful nitric oxide boosters and a proven delivery mechanism that defeats the nitric oxide "glitch" resulting in 275% better blood flow. There's not enough space here to fully explain how it works, so Dr. Sears will send anyone who orders *Primal Max Red* a free special report that explains everything.

MORE CLINICAL RESULTS

Nutrients in *Primal Max Red* have logged impressive results.

In a *Journal of Applied Physiology* study, one resulted in a 30 times MORE nitric oxide. And these increased levels lasted up to 12 hours.

"I measured my nitric oxide levels, you can buy a test kit from Amazon," reports 48-year-old Jeff O. "Monday night I showed depleted."



A new discovery that increases nitric oxide availability was recently proven in a clinical trial to boost blood flow 275%

Then he used ingredients in *Primal Max Red* and, "The results were off the charts. I first woke around 3 a.m. on Tuesday very excited. My nitric oxide levels measured at the top end of the range."

FREE BONUS TESTOSTERONE BOOSTER

Every order also gets Dr. Sears testosterone boosting formula *Primal Max Black* for free.

"If you want passionate 'rip your clothes off' sex you had in your younger days, you need nitric oxide to get your erection going. And testosterone for energy and drive," says Dr. Sears. "You get both with *Primal Max Red* and *Primal Max Black*."

HOW TO GET PRIMAL MAX

To secure free bottles of *Primal Max Black* and get the hot, new *Primal Max Red* formula, buyers should contact the Sears Health Hotline at 1-800-561-9700 within the next 48 hours. "It's not available in drug stores yet," says Dr. Sears. "The Hotline allows us to ship directly to the customer."

Dr. Sears feels so strongly about *Primal Max*, all orders are backed by a 100% money-back guarantee. "Just send me back the bottle and any unused product within 90 days from purchase date, and I'll send you all your money back," he says.

The Hotline will be open for the next 48 hours. After that, the phone number will be shut down to allow them to restock. Call 1-800-561-9700 to secure your limited supply of *Primal Max Red* and free bottles of *Primal Max Black*. You don't need a prescription, and those who call in the first 24 hours qualify for a significant discount. Use Promo Code NP1120PMAX327 when you call in. Lines are frequently busy, but all calls will be answered.

THESE STATEMENTS HAVE NOT BEEN EVALUATED BY THE FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION. THIS PRODUCT IS NOT INTENDED TO DIAGNOSE, TREAT, CURE OR PREVENT ANY DISEASE. RESULTS MAY VARY

The *Chicago Reader* is now biweekly

More than 50,000 copies will be available at nearly 1,200 locations across the city and suburbs.

Upcoming Issues:

Dec. 24, 2020	Year in Review
Jan. 7, 2021	
Jan. 21, 2021	Indoor Delights
Feb. 4, 2021	
Feb. 18, 2021	Cannabis Special Section
March 4, 2021	Windy City Times Insert
March 18, 2021	Best of Chicago
Apr. 1, 2021	Smart Money Week
Apr. 15, 2021	Cannabis Issue
Apr. 29, 2021	
May 13, 2021	
May 27, 2021	Cannabis Special Section
June 10, 2021	Pride Issue + Windy City Times Insert
June 24, 2021	

Download a free copy of any *Reader* issue here:
chicagoreader.com/chicago/issuearchives



Find one near you:
chicagoreader.com/map



READER

THE CANNABIS PLATFORM

a Reader resource for the canna curious

nuEra
A NEW ERA OF CANNABIS

 Close to Downtown!

 Free parking and buses & trains nearby

 Friendly dispensary staff for best product suggestions

 nuEracannabis.com

GREEN MIND PHYSICIANS
MEDICAL CANNABIS CARD CERTIFICATION BY PHONE
QUICK & CONVENIENT TELEMEDICINE

LIFETIME SUPPORT  EXPERIENCED PHYSICIANS

GREEN MIND PHYSICIANS

RESOURCES FOR CHICAGO PATIENTS
greenmindphysicians.com/thereader

NeuroMedici
by Dr. Consalter
Your partners in health and wellness.

READER BEST OF 2019
Find out today if medical cannabis or infusion therapy is right for you. Telemed available!

Serving medical cannabis patients since 2015.
www.neuromedici.com 312-772-2313

BLISS SHOP
CANNABIS ACCESSORIES & CBD

4809 N PULASKI
(773) 997-9238 BLISSCBDSHOP.COM

THE CITY IS **SPEAKING...**
AND WE HEAR YOU.

 #cannabisequityncc

 NATURE'S CARE CO.

expungement
know your rights
careers in cannabis
www.naturescarecompany.com


THE CHICAGO READER
420 COMPANION BOOK
COLORING, COOKING
AND CREATING

Reader 420 Companion Book

A cannacopia of fun!

CBD / cannabis recipes, psychedelic drawings to color, word puzzles to stimulate your brain, growing tips, and more!

Print and digital versions available.

chicagoreader.com/420book

To advertise, email ads@chicagoreader.com

ADULT TOYS | APPAREL | LEATHER HOLIDAY ITEMS | LUBE | & MORE!

DOORBUSTERS

AVAILABLE NOW THROUGH 12/25!

\$10



\$12⁵⁰



\$10



\$12⁹⁵



25% OFF
64TEN SUPERSTAR
LEATHER MC JACKETS



25% OFF
ALL ASYMETRICAL
HARNESSES



64TEN

SHOP IN-STORE OR
ONLINE AT
WWW.LEATHER64TEN.COM

6410 N. CLARK ST CHICAGO, IL 60626 | 773.508.0900 |    /LEATHER64TEN

DONATE TO GET LEOR GALIL'S BEST ARTICLES
OVER THE PAST 10 YEARS OF CHICAGO MUSIC!

CHICAGOREADER.COM/LEORBOOK



10 YEARS
OF CHICAGO READER MUSIC FEATURES
BY LEOR GALIL

Can you imagine Chicago without the *Chicago Reader*?

This December, we are asking 1,000 people to donate to the *Chicago Reader* to prove community-funded journalism is the way of the future. Donate today and keep Chicago independent.

chicagoreader.com/donate

CLASSIFIEDS

JOBS

ADMINISTRATIVE
SALES & MARKETING
FOOD & DRINK
SPAS & SALONS
BIKE JOBS
GENERAL

REAL ESTATE

RENTALS
FOR SALE
NON-RESIDENTIAL
ROOMATES

MARKET-PLACE

GOODS
SERVICES
HEALTH & WELLNESS
INSTRUCTION
MUSIC & ARTS
NOTICES
MESSAGES
LEGAL NOTICES
ADULT SERVICES

JOBS GENERAL

Essendant Management Services LLC is seeking an Application Developer 3 in Deerfield, IL to implement & support the Sterling Order Management Platform in a high volume integrated system environment. MAY TELE-COMMUTE UP TO 100% FROM ANY LOCATION IN THE U.S. Apply at www.essendant.com, reference job #APPL10275

TransUnion, LLC seeks Consultants for various & unanticipated workites throughout the U.S. (HQ: Chicago, IL) to perform statistical analysis & segmentation on datasets. Master's in Statistics/Mathematics/Analytics/any Engineering or other Quantitative field + 4yrs exp. req'd. Skills req'd: exp. w/R, Python, SAS, SQL queries for data extraction, Hadoop, machine learning, risk calculations, predictive models, advanced algorithms, Tableau, Hive, Pig, data mining (logistic and linear regression, time series analysis, Least Squares approximation, GBM). Telecommuting permitted. Send resume to: R. Harvey, REF: VW, 555 W Adams, Chicago, IL 60661

DePaul University seeks Research and Data Analysts for Chicago, IL location to build large research data sets from parcel-level admin&other place-based real estate data. Master's in Urban Planning/Urban Dev/Public Policy/Geo/related field+1yr exp. req'd. Req'd skills: Must have exp w/parcel level admin real estate data sets; working w/ community dev practitioners to understand regional&neighborhood-level housing market dynamics; GIS; ArcGis; SPSS; R; Excel; Tableau; SAS; SketchUp; Adobe Illustrator. Send resume to: Geoff Smith, REF: YJ, 55 E. Jackson Blvd., 7th Fl, Chicago, IL 60604

SW Automate Test Engin - Comcast Cable Comm, LLC, Chicago, IL. Contrib w/i Multichannel Video Programming Distributor (MVPD) QA team; Reqs: Bach in CS, Engin, or rtd; 2 yrs exp build & maintain test automate script & frmwrk use JavaScript, Selenium & defect mngmnt in Agile environ; & map reqs to ensure SW feature have proper test coverage. Apply to: Denise_Mapes@cable.comcast.com Ref Job ID #3264

(St. Charles, IL) **Nidec Mobility America Corporation seeks Test Engineer** w/ Bach or for deg equiv in EE, Electr Eng, CE or CS & 3 yrs exp in job offered or w/ LabVIEW devp. Must have 3 yrs with Test Stand Devp; 1 yr exp utiliz other program lang (.NET, LabWindows/CVI C, etc.); 1 yr exp w/ CAN/LIN Commun; & 1 yr exp w Test Devp Envir. Apply to J. Dobbs, 3709 Ohio Avenue, St. Charles, IL, 60174.

BIG O MOVERS seeks CDL Drivers with Moving Experience Hourly Rate negotiable up to \$25/hour Call 773-487-9900.

GENERAL MANAGER, GLOBAL RACQUET SPORTS Wilson Sporting Goods Co. seeks General Manager, Global Racquet Sports to work in Chicago, IL. Prvd strategic leadrshp & direct the operatnl, prdct, commercl, markng, financl & technicl activ. of the global Racquet Sports BU. Degree & commensurate exp. req'd. Domstc & internatnl travel req. 25-40% of time. Apply at the following website: <https://tinyurl.com/y5c9yyl7>.

PRICING: Kraft Foods Group Brands LLC seeks Director, Strategic Pricing to work in Chicago, IL & lead pricing strategy and execution for the US Retail and Foodservice businesses within Kraft Heinz. Degree & commensurate exp. req'd. Apply online: kraftheinzcompany.com/applyNA.html at #R-33121.

Project Leader. Chicago, Illinois. Plan and coordinate technical activities and project designs for architectural projects under supervision of licensed architect. Work with: Rhino Certified Level 2; Revit Architecture - Autodesk Certified Professionals; AIA/Plan; APM, tug, MEP, sterile tunnels; FAA and TSA regulations; AutoCAD, Revit; SketchUp, Formit, Dynamo, 3D MAX, Autodesk Revit Photoshop; Mental Ray, V-Ray, Maxwell; Adobe Creative Suite and Microsoft Office. Required education: master's degree in architecture/related AND Required certifications: Rhino Certified Level 2; and, Revit Architecture - Autodesk Certified Professionals. NO PHONE CALLS. Forward resumes to: Studio Gang Architects, Attn: Sonia Miranda Monroy, Ref. HW, 1520 W. Division Street, Chicago, IL 60642

Electrical Engineer-Atoll: Must have Master's deg in Engineering and one year of exp as an Engineer or Bachelor's degree + 5yrs of progressively responsible exp as an Engineer working with radio planning & optimization software. Direct resumes to: Nicolas Dubois at job_us@forsk.com, Forsk US Inc 200 South Wacker Drive, 31st Floor, Chicago, IL 60606

(Chicago, IL) **Armitage Pharmacy, Inc. seeks Accountant** w/ Bach or for deg equiv in Acct, Fin, Bus Adm or rld fld & 2 yrs exp in job offer or 2 yrs exp w/in intl audit firm wrking w/ pharm clients incl 2 yrs exp conduct audit prog for pharm clients; 1 yr in proc & internal control optim & 1 yr w/ US GAAP. Apply to HR, 3650 W Armitage Ave, Chicago, IL 60647.

(St. Charles, IL) **Nidec Mobility America Corporation seeks Software Validation Engineer II** w/ Bach or for deg equiv in EE, Electron Eng or CE & 2 yrs exp in job offered dSpace HIL system for test autom & exec for Auto subsyst. Also accepts Mast or for deg equiv in EE, Electron Eng or CE & 1 yr exp in job offered dSpace HIL system for test autom & exec for Auto subsyst. Must have 1 yr exp w/ Autom Desk & Control Desk SW; Matlab & Simulink; CAN & LIN; CANalyzer & CANoe; & LIN testing w/ J2602A specific. Apply to J. Dobbs, 3709 Ohio Avenue, St. Charles, IL, 60174

RENTALS

EDGEWATER COMMUTER ADVANTAGE Walk to beach, bus, red line or shops. Awesome living and dining room. Huge bedrooms with walk in closets. Big kitchen with pantry. \$1600. Plus patio, laundry and bike storage. Call 773-275-3216.

JANUARY 1-Sunny Andersonville TWO bedroom, balcony, modern bath, modern kitchen, hardwood floors, mini blinds, private backyard and deck. Washers and dryers on premises. No dogs. \$1195. (708)482-4712

Apartment for rent, 4 rooms including one bedroom. Apartment is located in shopping area of Humboldt Park with access to CTA bus and trains. Metra train is nearby. Rent is \$950 monthly plus security deposit. Heat is included. (773) 592-2989

ARTS EVENTS

In the Shadow of the Feminine: featuring artwork by new upcoming artist Jenny Chernansky. See her work online www.jchernansky.com or in person at ARC Gallery 1463 W Chicago Ave. Exhibition dates: Nov 25 - Dec 19, 2020. Gallery hours: Fri 3-7pm - Sat & Sun 12-4 pm

PROFESSIONALS & SERVICES

Personal Training in: Bodybuilding, Dominating Alpha Strengthening! As well as Self-defense, Spiritual Awakening, Couples Building, Women's Empowerment, Gang Prevention, Drug Recovery, B.S. Awareness Specialist! Take over strategist! (312)-392-8663

Imagine What \$30,000 In Funding Could Do For Your Business? Business Owners, Licensed Professionals, Real Estate Investors And Startups Welcome. Get Started Now dnrvnturesllc.com.

CLEANING SERVICES CHESTNUT ORGANIZING AND CLEANING SERVICES: especially for people who need an organizing service because of depression, elderly, physical or mental challenges or other causes for your home's clutter, disorganization, dysfunction, etc. We can organize for the downsizing of your current possessions to more easily move into a smaller home. With your help, we can help to organize your move. We can organize and clean for the deceased in lieu of having the bereaved needing to do the preparation to sell or rent the deceased's home. We are absolutely not judgmental; we've seen and done "worse" than your job assignment. With your help, we can please help you? Chestnut Cleaning Service: 312-332-5575. www.ChestnutCleaning.com

COUNSELING & PSYCHOTHERAPY IN THESE DIFFICULT TIMES we need not isolate. If you are feeling overwhelmed, stressed, anxious, or depressed we can talk. I can help you better understand these situations and create solutions for them. My practical approach entails a therapeutic alliance that is affirming, empathic,

and interactive. To talk contact Michael J. Bland, Psy.D., LCPC. Northside location. 773-404-8161. Michael@BlandTherapy.com www.BlandTherapy.com

ADULT SERVICES

Danielle's Lip Service, Erotic Phone Chat. 24/7. Must be 21+. Credit/Debit Cards Accepted. All Fetishes and Fantasies Are Welcomed. Personal, Private and Discrete. 773-935-4995

READER matches

MJM Seeks Older Female Lover & Friend married Jewish male 55 college and self employed seeks older female lover and friend for discreet LTR I can host call 224-292-9899 em.dragonmasterscs69@gmail.com

Hello my darling, write me I'm waiting for you!!!! If you are looking for a moment of escape just for you you can already contact me, this also for evenings, dinners and after dinner, or for any place you prefer, my presence will always be up to the situation, so in my company you can only make a good impression. sexyvaleriahot@gmail.com

Dom Seeks Sub Married Female Married Male Dom 52 Seeks Sub Married Female For Discreet LTR I can host and discreet on weekends can call 224-292-9899 and em.dragonmasterscs69@gmail.com

Submit your Reader Matches ad today at chicagoreader.com/matches for FREE.

Matches ads are not guaranteed and will run in print and online on a space-available basis.



Store Shop the Reader

chicagoreader.com/store



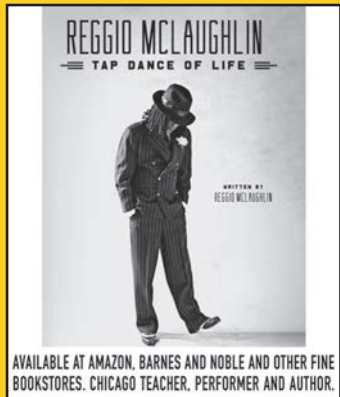
WANT TO ADD A LISTING TO OUR CLASSIFIEDS?

Email details to classified-ads@chicagoreader.com

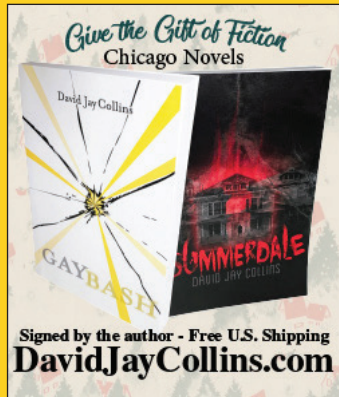
the platform

The Chicago Reader Guide to Business and Professional Services

books



REGGIO MCLAUGHLIN
TAP DANCE OF LIFE
WRITTEN BY REGGIO MCLAUGHLIN
AVAILABLE AT AMAZON, BARNES AND NOBLE AND OTHER FINE BOOKSTORES. CHICAGO TEACHER, PERFORMER AND AUTHOR.



Give the Gift of Fiction
Chicago Novels
David Jay Collins
GAYBASIN
SUMMERDALE
Signed by the author - Free U.S. Shipping
DavidJayCollins.com



Herrera Landscape
We bring your outdoor vision to life!
847-679-5622
DESIGN • BUILD • MAINTAIN
www.herrerandscape.com



Noise from Outside?
Soundproofing Window Inserts
Visit stormsnaps.com or noisewindows.com
Reduce or Eliminate Fog & Water
Keeps Bugs & Spiders Out
sales@stormsnaps.com
Alpina Manufacturing, Chicago, IL
1-800-915-2828



Custom cut Acrylic desk or table tops
Instead of glass, we can Laser cut beautifully protective Acrylic tops
sales@desktoppers.com
Alpina Manufacturing, Chicago, IL
1-800-915-2828
773-202-8887
Visit our website or call us for info: desktoppers.com

legal

COLLABORATIVE
PREMARITAL
FAMILY
DIVORCE
MEDIATION
Brigitte Schmidt Bell, P.C.
Phone and Video Consultations. Call today.
BrigitteBell.com
Lawyers@bsbpc.com | 312-360-1124

The Law Office of
Roger V. McCaffrey-Boss, P.C.
When experience counts...
In service to the community for over 35 years.
• Business Organization
• Wills, Trusts & Probate
• Real Estate Closings
• Premarital Agreements
33 N. Dearborn St., Ste. 800, Chicago, IL 60602
312-263-8800
RVMLAWYER@AOL.COM

Mulryan & York
Attorneys at Law
4001 N. Wolcott, Chicago, IL 60613
773-248-8887
www.mulryanandyork.com

ENJOY YOUR SPORT IN STYLE
LGBTQ+
WWW.LGBTQGOLF.ORG



Be a Healthcare Hero
• Hybrid Programs (online and/or on-campus)
• MRI, X-Ray, Surgery, Dental, Dialysis, Ultrasound & MA/Phl. Programs
• Online, Weekend, Evening and Day Schedules
• Financial Aid and Grants Available (if you qualify)
• Accredited and Affordable
Stellar Career College
19 S. LaSalle Street, Chicago (Loop) | 312-687-3000 | stellarcollege.edu

funeral services

AFFORDABLE
CREMATIONS & HEADSTONES
ELLICE V. MOORE
LICENSED FUNERAL DIRECTOR
312.401.9399
ellicevmoore48@gmail.com



Serving Chicagoland and NW Indiana
We Offer Quality Affordable
• At Need Funeral Services
• Pre-Planned Funeral Services
• Traditional Funeral/Cremation Services
• Direct Cremation/Direct Burial
• Memorial Services
• Specializing in Veteran Services
773.956.4000
5112 S. Western Ave
Chicago, IL 60609
www.graceandmercyfs.biz
"Let all that you do be done in love"
- 1 Cor. 16:14

job skills



Start your career with FREE job training
With our Careers in Manufacturing Program, you can learn skills in:
• CNC (computer numerical control) machining
• Welding
• Press Brake Operation
Supportive services and job placement provided
Jane Addams Resource Corporation | 708.581.8356 | www.jane-addams.org

YOUR AD HERE

To advertise, email ads@chicagoreader.com

TIME IS RUNNING OUT TO

SAVE OUR STAGES

NIVA
NATIONAL
INDEPENDENT
VENUE
ASSOCIATION

THANK YOU TO THE CHAMPIONS OF SAVE OUR STAGES ACT S.4258/HR 7806

SEN. CORNYN • SEN. KLOBUCHAR • REP. WELCH • REP. WILLIAMS • LEADER SCHUMER

AND THE INCREDIBLE SHOW OF BIPARTISAN SUPPORT IN CONGRESS INCLUDING THESE COSPONSORS OF THE SOS ACT:

SEN. JOHN CORNYN (R-TX)
SEN. AMY KLOBUCHAR (D-MN)
SEN. RON WYDEN (D-OR)
SEN. SUSAN M. COLLINS (R-ME)
SEN. RICHARD BLUMENTHAL (D-CT)
SEN. GARY A. PETERS (D-MI)
SEN. KEVIN GRANGER (R-ND)
SEN. RICHARD J. DURBIN (D-IL)
SEN. STEVE DAINES (D-MT)
SEN. JEANNE SHAHEEN (D-NH)
SEN. BOOZ JONES (D-AL)
SEN. TRON LILLES (R-NC)
SEN. TINA SMITH (D-WV)
SEN. EDWARD J. MARKEY (D-MA)
SEN. ROY BLUNT (R-MO)
SEN. MARGARET WOOD HASSAN (D-NH)
SEN. LINDSEY GRAHAM (R-SC)
SEN. DEBBIE STABENOW (D-MI)
SEN. CORY GARDNER (R-CO)
SEN. KAMALA D. HARRIS (D-CA)
SEN. TAMMY DUCKWORTH (D-IL)
SEN. CHRISTOPHER A. COONS (D-DE)
SEN. CARPER, THOMAS R. (D-DE)
SEN. JEFF MERKLEY (D-OR)
SEN. JERRY MORAN (R-NS)
SEN. CHARLES E. SCHUMER (D-NY)
SEN. KYRSTEN SINEMA (D-AZ)
SEN. JON TESTER (D-MT)
SEN. CATHYRTINE GORTCHAKO (D-NY)
SEN. BILL CASSIDY (R-LA)
SEN. SHELLEIGH WHITEHOUSE (D-RI)
SEN. JACK REED (D-RI)
SEN. DIANNE FEINSTEIN (D-CA)
SEN. JACKIE ROSEN (D-NV)
SEN. WHEATLEY E. GILLIBRAND (D-NY)
SEN. SHERROD BROWN (D-OH)
SEN. TAMMY BALDWIN (D-WI)
SEN. CORY A. BOOKER (D-NJ)
SEN. ROB PORTMAN (R-OH)
SEN. ANGUS S. KING JR. (I-ME)
SEN. ROBERT P. CASEY JR. (D-PA)
SEN. ROGER F. WICKER (R-MS)
SEN. MARTIN HEINRICH (D-NH)

SEN. MARK R. WARNER (D-VA)
SEN. ROBERT MENENDEZ (D-NJ)
SEN. PAT ROBERTS (R-KS)
SEN. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN (D-MD)
SEN. TIM KANE (D-WA)
SEN. CHRISTOPHER MURPHY (D-CT)
SEN. JOHN KENNEDY (R-LA)
SEN. TOM UDALL (D-NM)
SEN. JONI ERNST (R-IA)
SEN. JOSEPH MANCHIN III (D-WV)
REP. PETER WELCH (D-VT)
REP. ROGER WILLIAMS (R-TX)
REP. SUZANNE BONAMICI (R-OR)
REP. MARCIA L. FUDGE (D-OH)
REP. DAUL M. GRIALVA (D-AZ)
REP. BARBARA LEE (D-CA)
REP. MIKE QUIGLEY (D-IL)
REP. TUDORPH E. SMITH (D-FL)
REP. ADAM B. SCHIFF (D-CA)
REP. MICHAEL F. DOWLE (D-PA)
REP. TIM RYAN (D-OH)
REP. JIM COOPER (D-TN)
REP. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON (D-DC)
REP. BRIAN K. FITZPATRICK (R-PA)
REP. CHELLE FINGOER (D-ME)
REP. FRED UPTON (R-MI)
REP. MIKE LEVIN (D-CA)
REP. GRACE F. NAPOLITANO (D-CA)
REP. VERONICA ESCOBAR (D-TX)
REP. BRIAN K. PHILLIPS (D-NH)
REP. DAVID N. CICILLINE (D-NY)
REP. ILHAN OMAR (D-MN)
REP. LINDA T. SANCHEZ (D-CA)
REP. ROONEY DAVIS (R-IL)
REP. JIMMY GOMEZ (D-CA)
REP. ANGIE CRANG (D-NM)
REP. BRENDAN F. BOYLE (D-PA)
REP. DANIEL T. KILDEE (D-NY)
REP. JERROLD NADLER (D-NY)
REP. ADAM SMITH (D-WA)
REP. MIKE THOMPSON (D-CA)
REP. DAVID LOESSACK (D-IA)
REP. ANDY LEVIN (D-MI)

REP. CONOR LAMB (D-PA)
REP. DANNY K. DAVIS (D-IL)
REP. EDIE BERNICE JOHNSON (D-TX)
REP. RO KHANNA (D-CA)
REP. JESUS G. "CHUY" GARCIA (D-IL)
REP. COLIN Z. ALLEED (D-TX)
REP. BRIAN HIGGINS (D-NY)
REP. MAX ROSE (D-NY)
REP. SHARICE DAVIDS (D-KS)
REP. STEVE COHEN (D-TN)
REP. J. LUIS CORREA (D-CA)
REP. HENRY CUELLAR (D-TX)
REP. ADAM KINZINGER (R-IL)
REP. DONALD S. BEYER JR. (D-VA)
REP. DAVID J. TRONE (D-MD)
REP. TOM COLE (R-OK)
REP. ANN KIRKPATRICK (D-AZ)
REP. KATHY CASTRO (D-FL)
REP. TOM O'ALLERAN (D-AZ)
REP. ELISSA SLOVIN (D-MI)
REP. HAROLD ROGERS (R-KY)
REP. CEDRIC L. RICHMOND (D-LA)
REP. ANTHONY G. BROWN (D-MD)
REP. JIMIE BASIN (D-MD)
REP. JULIA BROWNLEY (D-CA)
REP. VERN BUCHANAN (D-FL)
REP. HARVEY HOUDEA (D-CA)
REP. KAY GRANGER (R-TX)
REP. ANNA G. ESCH (D-CA)
REP. DANIEL GOTO (D-FL)
REP. EARL BLUMENAUER (D-OR)
REP. SUSIE LEE (D-NY)
REP. BRAD SHERMAN (D-CA)
REP. GREG STANTON (D-AZ)
REP. RUBEN GILLES (D-AZ)
REP. FRANK A. LUCAS (R-IN)
REP. JAMIE D. SCHIMMEL (D-IL)
REP. RON KIM (D-WI)
REP. JAMES A. HINES (D-CT)
REP. DWIGHT EVANS (D-PA)
REP. JARED HUFFMAN (D-CA)
REP. MARK A. VESEY (D-TX)
REP. JAMES R. LANGSTON (D-RI)
REP. YVETTE D. CLARKE (D-NY)

REP. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD (D-CA)
REP. JOSH HARDEE (D-CA)
REP. SUSAN WILD (D-PA)
REP. BILL FOSTER (D-IL)
REP. ANNA M. AUER (D-NH)
REP. ALICE E. HARTINGS (D-FL)
REP. LIZZIE FLETCHER (D-TX)
REP. DON BACON (R-NE)
REP. JUDY CHU (D-CA)
REP. KENDRA S. HORN (D-OK)
REP. LLOYD BOGGETT (D-TX)
REP. MARCEL T. MACIEL (D-TX)
REP. STEPHEN F. LYNCH (D-MA)
REP. JOAQUIN CASTRO (D-TX)
REP. TED LIEU (D-CA)
REP. ERIC SWALLWELL (D-CA)
REP. VICENTE GONZALEZ (D-TX)
REP. FLORENCE VELA (D-TX)
REP. BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN (D-NJ)
REP. FREDERICA S. WILSON (D-FL)
REP. BETTY MCCOLLUM (D-MN)
REP. DONNA E. SHALALA (D-FL)
REP. MARK DESJARDIN (D-CA)
REP. ADRIANO ESPALLAT (D-NY)
REP. JOHN B. LARSON (D-CT)
REP. MATT CARTWRIGHT (D-PA)
REP. JAHANA HAYES (D-CT)
REP. RAJA KRISHNAMOORTHY (D-IL)
REP. DINI TITUS (D-NY)
REP. BEN RAY LUNN (D-NM)
REP. BENNIE G. THOMPSON (D-MS)
REP. JOSH GOTTMILLER (D-NY)
REP. COLLIN C. PETERSON (D-MN)
REP. CHRIS PAPPAS (D-NH)
REP. JIMMY PANETTA (D-CA)
REP. DEBBIE WISSEMAN SCHULTZ (D-FL)
REP. PAUL TONKO (D-NY)
REP. ALMA S. ADAMS (D-NC)
REP. ELISE M. STEFANIA (R-NY)
REP. JOE CUNNINGHAM (D-SC)
REP. MIKE SHERILL (D-NJ)
REP. WIL WARD (D-TX)
REP. ROBIN L. KELLY (D-IL)
REP. CHENI BUSTOS (D-IL)

REP. KATHLEEN M. RICE (D-NY)
REP. BILLY LONG (R-MO)
REP. JOE NEGUSE (D-CO)
REP. ANTONIO DELGADO (D-NY)
REP. THOMAS R. SUOZZI (D-NY)
REP. HALEY M. STEVENS (D-MI)
REP. CHARLIE CRIST (D-FL)
REP. TERRI A. SEWELL (D-AL)
REP. CAROLYN B. MALONEY (D-NY)
REP. DON YOUNG (R-AK)
REP. RICK LARSEN (D-WA)
REP. JASON CROPP (D-CO)
REP. KATIE PORTER (D-CA)
REP. HANSEN S. JEFFRIES (D-NY)
REP. JERRY MCNERNEY (D-CA)
REP. ROSA L. DELAUNO (D-CT)
REP. LISA BLUNT ROCHSTER (D-DE)
REP. TOM MALINOWSKI (D-NJ)
REP. EMANUEL CLEAVER (D-MD)
REP. MARK POCAN (D-WI)
REP. DEBRA A. BALAND (D-NM)
REP. DORIS O. MATSUI (D-CA)
REP. SEAN CASTEN (D-IL)
REP. PETER A. HATJAZIDIS (D-OR)
REP. DAVID E. PRICE (D-ME)
REP. BRADLEY SCOTT SCHNEIDER (D-IL)
REP. ABBY FINKENBAUGH (D-IA)
REP. DENNY HECK (D-WA)
REP. KIM SCHROEDER (D-OR)
REP. LAUREN LEEVERHOOD (D-IL)
REP. DIANA DEGETTE (D-CO)
REP. STEPHANIE N. MURPHY (D-FL)
REP. STEVEN HORSFORD (D-NV)
REP. JAMES P. MCCOY (D-WA)
REP. JONCE BEATTY (D-OH)
REP. VAL BOUTLER BENTING (D-FL)
REP. ALBIO Sires (D-NY)
REP. JOSEPH D. MORELLE (D-NY)
REP. DEBEN KILMER (D-WA)
REP. DEBBIE DINGELL (D-MI)
REP. ELAINE G. LORIA (D-VA)
REP. PAUL HUIZ (D-CA)
REP. MICHAEL K. SIMPSON (D-ID)

Have your voice heard, go to [SaveOurStages.com](https://www.SaveOurStages.com)

#SAVEOURSTAGES

the platform

continued

health and mental health

entertainment

Mental Health is Essential

Chicago Behavioral Hospital provides hope for those struggling with depression, anxiety, substance use, and other mental health conditions.

We are all in this together. Let us help.

Inpatient and intensive outpatient programs for teens and adults.
Free and confidential assessments.



844.756.8600

chicagobehavioralhospital.com

Forward thinking.
Forward looking.
Forward momentum.

LGBTQ Telehealth Counseling
Schedule Online
Free Initial Consultation



Troy Johnson,
MSW, LCSW
Licensed
Psychotherapist

773-875-0928

www.TroyJohnsonCounseling.com

ORTHOPAEDIC SURGEON
CAR ACCIDENT, WORK INJURY OR ORTHOPAEDIC INJURY

**GOLD COAST ORTHOPAEDIC
SPINE AND HAND SURGERY**

ROBERT JAMES FINK, M.D.

THREE CHICAGO LOCATIONS
plus locations in Elgin & Naperville

312-654-8800

chicagobonedoc.com

goldcoastorthopedic@yahoo.com



LIVE & VIDEO

Entertainment

KIDS • CIRCUS
NIGHTLIFE • TELEGRAMS



320-333-4095

fireflyproductions.co

To advertise, email ads@chicagoreader.com



KOVAL

“JUST BEGGING FOR
HOLIDAY
COCKTAILS
WITH BUBBLES”

..... IMBIBE MAGAZINE

PLEASE DRINK RESPONSIBLY

KOVAL DISTILLERY NOW AT A NEW LOCATION 4241 N RAVENSWOOD AVE

KOVALDISTILLERY.COM    @ KOVALDISTILLERY